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THE STORY BEHIND THE COVER

We kept warning and warning them, but people just laughed the way they always do—or did, rather....

I'd first gotten interested in Flying Saucers back in the fifties when people started thinking there was something to these constantly recurring reports of strange things hurtling through the sky. If this had been a thousand years earlier, we'd all have been on our knees, no doubt, seeing in these strange shapes warnings of the end of the Earth. But, a thousand years later, we were a more sophisticated people. We didn't have the sense to be afraid of what we couldn't understand.

When news came through that a cloud (that's what the reports called it, "a cloud") of shapes in the sky had appeared over Lhasa and that devout Tibetans and Chinese Communist officials were milling around the temples in the thousands, animosities forgotten, celebrating the coming of the men from something they called *Shambala*, we felt superior over these people who weren't as advanced as us.

And then the next day Ovington Proving Grounds went off the air.

And then the state of Texas.

The gentlemen who represented Texas in Congress were quick to demand a bipartisan investigation.

A forcefield seemed to have been thrown around the state. No news was coming out of Texas. No radio stations seemed to be working. No planes were able to cross Texas. Reporters who had flown as far as the Texan border and then found themselves unable to proceed a step further, reported seeing people walking about, on the other side, with an obviously dazed look.

The day before Texas had gone off the air, a commentator in Dallas had chortled over the latest Flying Saucer story. A giant Flying Saucer had been seen heading towards Dallas that morning—a fantastic round thing, large enough to cover a small village according to one report—and the commentator, paying his respects to what he termed the silly season, had quoted the warning of a local Saucer group that the long anticipated Invasion might be on.

The next day, we in New York began to watch for Their coming.

We had warned people, just as the group in Texas had done, that there was no assurance that the coming of the Saucers meant the Millenium was near, and we had attacked the emotional blackmailers who had started cults based upon alleged contacts with the "men" piloting the Saucers. We felt that even if these visits had taken place, they could be interpreted as "softening-up" steps, and nothing more.

They came, finally, the morning of the sixth day after Texas had gone off the air.

I was down at the Battery, watching, as the huge Mother Ship landed in the Bay—a shimmering forcefield quickly thrown around it while, from inside the ship, more than a dozen smaller scouts quickly emerged and were soon hovering over New York.

There was pandemonium where I was, of course. Men and women were kneeling in the streets. A wild-eyed man near me was shouting about the end of the world. But I could only feel numb. The end of the world that we had known was undoubtedly near. The saucer that was hovering closer and closer above our heads heralded a strange Tomorrow.....

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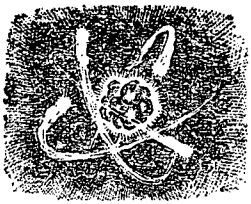

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GABRIEL HEATTER reports on dramatic new invention that triumphs over hearing loss and hides deafness as never before

New Way for Deaf to Hear with Both Ears ...Eye-Glass Hearing

by Gabriel Heatter — Internationally Famous Commentator heard nightly over MBS network

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what pilots a ufo?

by IVAN T. SANDERSON

Does intelligent life, similar to ours, exist on other planets? Are these intelligent entities able to cross time?

IF IT IS assumed that UFOS—namely, as yet Unidentified Flying Objects—exist, the first question everybody would like answered is, What are they? Although this wish obviously cannot, at present, be gratified by the very nature of things, and even if such things do not exist, there is still no reason why we should not attempt to at least list the possibilities.

This we have already done in our previous article wherein we postulated four basic categories that warrant consideration. To reiterate, I shall list these again, but in a different order and somewhat different terms, as follows:—

(1) *Objects or phenomena of a physical nature but not themselves alive.*

(2) *Life-forms or animate creatures indigenous to rarefied atmospheres or space itself.*

(3) *Machines constructed by and flown or controlled by human beings on this planet.*

(4) *Machines constructed by intelligent creatures, entities, or life-forms somewhere other than on this planet.*

And, as we have already pointed out, this is not of

Ivan T. Sanderson writes about who or what may be piloting the UFOs in the present article, the third of a group being written specially for this magazine by the noted scientist and explorer, author of the recently published MONKEY KINGDOM (Hanover House, $6.95) and other works.

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course in any way a comprehensive classification nor by any means an all-inclusive framework for the listing of all possibilities. UFOS could be anything. Nevertheless, if they *do* exist, they must be something, however abstruse to our way of thinking; and, unless they all come from a realm outside our particular physical universe or one which is beyond our logic or possible comprehension, they must be susceptible to identification and explanation.

In our previous article we discussed, though all too briefly, the first three possibilities as listed above, and expressed our intention of treating the fourth at greater length, by itself, in the future. This shall now be done. The reader should, however, bear in mind throughout that what is to be said is but an exercise in logic or an intellectual pursuit rather than the exposition of a theory.

Let us begin by analyzing the question. This states that *some* UFOS *could* be Machines constructed by living entities on some heavenly body other than our Earth, and thereby implies that said UFOS are material, non-natural objects that are piloted to this planet by living organisms or life-forms having an intelligence at least equivalent to if not greater than, or of the same kind as our own. This poses three more questions of basic import but widely difficult natures. Let us list them in order of difficulty. The first is, "What is an Intelligent entity?": the second, "What is a Machine?": the third, "What is a heavenly body?" And, remember, this is an exercise in logic, so that we are dealing with possibilities, not probabilities—at least at this juncture.

We *(Homo)* are exceedingly hidebound and confined in our attitude towards the nature of all things. To put it another way, we are wholeheartedly *anthropocentric* about everything. Moreover, we regard ourselves as unique, despite the fact that some groups regard themselves as made in the image of God, others of animals of various kinds.

Further, we claim *intelligence* as solely our perquisite and prerogative, though we allow a superior intellect to the Almighty—and *instincts* to what we call the lower animals.

Thus, we automatically boggle at the very idea of any living thing other than a human being (i.e. one of us) being intelligent. But this is not all.

We are equally egocentric about other aspects of this matter. Not even the philosophically trained can conceive of an intelligence contained in any *body* other than that of a human being or at least in a body shaped like that of a human being and made of the same kind of stuff as our own.

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How often have you heard scientists and other serious thinkers state categorically that there cannot be life, let alone "intelligent life" on the other planets of our solar system because there is no oxygen there, or because it is too hot or too cold. This misconception is not only puerile and pathetic, it is wholly unscientific and illogical.

There is no earthly, unearthly, or holy reason why an intelligence (whatever that may be), should not be contained in an entity composed of any combination of elements, at any temperature from absolute zero to an infinity of heat. This entity could be of any size or shape from a single electron to a universe or to all possible universes—*i.e. The Whole* of the Buddhists or the *Almighty* of Islam, Christianity, Judaism, and others. Presumably, an inintelligence need not even have a body or be associated with any particular entity at all.

Intelligence has not yet been defined, nevertheless, we may state, for our present purposes, that it is an entity embodied or disembodied that is capable of building and has the desire to construct machines! This is a nasty one and looks like we are either begging the question or trying to wriggle out of it. We are not.

The definition of a *machine* proves to be almost as difficult as the interpretation of intelligence. The word itself means "something that is made" and, thus, in the particular case under discussion, "something made by an intelligent entity". Now this really has led us into an intellectual Mobius-circle, and to break out of such a topological paradox is not easy.

A shell is *made* by a shellfish, and deliberately. Whether the snail has a desire to build a shell cannot be surely stated as we have not yet managed to communicate *intelligently* with any mollusc, but it would certainly appear to do so and the result must therefore be called a *machine*. By an extension of this logic, the body of all animals or plants are but machines made by their immortal germ cells to reside in for a period and until more of *their* kind have been developed. Likewise, parts of bodies—such as brains and nerves—may be said to be machines, and ones that can in certain circumstances have an independent life of their own.

Now, it has been contended that machines should be defined as inanimate entities made with tools with the implication that the latter are wielded by intelligence. But there are nice little mud nests made by certain wasps wielding small stones as tools, and some ants carry other ants and squeeze them to make them stitch up leaves—sort of

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primitive staplers. What to make of these items? What is a tool, what is the end-product, and is there intelligence behind either example?

To say that some UFOS may be machines is, therefore, to make a very broad statement. In fact, it could bring us back to the Countess Wassilko-Serecki's life forms, feeding on pure energy, dwelling in space, and constructing bodies for themselves out of tenuous bladders of colloidal silicones. On the other hand, it can mean not only that they are metallic monsters like guided missiles or aerial *Queen Marys*, but also that they could be constructions of an infinity of kinds, made of almost anything, material or immaterial, with tools or without, or perhaps *just blown together by pure thought*. Have you ever considered that one?"

Manifestly, however, the vast majority if not one hundred percent of all those who believe that there are such things as UFOS—from the U. S. Airforce and Major Donald Keyhoe to George Adamski and the California mystics—appear to be convinced that at least some of them are what we commonly call machines and particularly transport machines, constructed of separate parts (especially of metal and plastics) made and put together with tools by some kind of creature (and the concept seems to be predominantly of at least a humanoid character) with an intelligence at least equivalent to ours. This may be so, and it could be so on purely logical lines, but it must be stressed that this concept too is far too anthropocentric and limited. Both the machines and any intellects that made them could be of such an enormous variety that the resultant possibilities are actually infinite. The things these machines could do would likewise be infinite in variety.

This leaves us with our third and last question, "What is a Heavenly Body?" and specifically what are such bodies on which such machines could be constructed by such intelligences?

Now, this can be answered in two parts; the first, along the lines of pure logic and by way of intellectual exercise; the second, on perfectly solid scientific ground. In fact, we may herewith step boldly out of the realm of mere possibility into the realm of high probability.

Of course, an Intelligence, as we have seen, could reside or exist anywhere (or nowhere, for that matter) in any state, at any temperature, and presumably at any time. Likewise a machine could be made of anything, anywhere, at any time (or, presumably, nowhere at some time, or anywhere at no time) and it could be made to do anything. Presumably the Almighty can do

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anything or everything; the abilities of the wasp and snail are limited; the potential of an electron is probably limited to simply "being"; the sum-total of a neutrino's existence is to "be-not". Thus, the possibility of range of "heavenly bodies" on which to construct "machines" is also infinite—it could be on or in a gaseous sun, on a solid planet, or in space itself: it could be in contra-matter or contra-space: in this space-time continuum or another.

Nevertheless, in all this infinity of possibilities the whole process could quite well take place on the surface of a solid body going around a gaseous sun in any part of any galaxy in our space-time continuum, and about "now". And that is what both serious-minded Ufologists and non-serious-minded "saucerers" are talking and dreaming about. What are the probabilities?

Actually, the probability is extremely high, and for a large number of reasons. Let us investigate these reasons one at a time, in a proper sequence, calmly, scientifically, and logically.

First, by use of a machine called a spectroscope, supported by a very wide range of theory and other ingenious machines, it is known that there are 92 *natural* elements or forms of matter, and that the whole known universe of matter that can be seen by telescopes or examined by microscopes is made up of various combinations of these alone. They may occur in different *forms* (isotopes), or *states* as in some dwarf stars but they are always the same and there are no others.

Second, stars (suns) are gaseous and planets are solid—sometimes plus liquids, plus gases. Moreover, suns and planets go together, so that when one of the former is created, a group of the latter come into being (see the published works of Weisackher in Germany and Kuiper in America). Also, the planets invariably form a family, strung out around the star at set distances, with a small one near the star and another small one farthest from it, and those in between first increasing and then decreasing in size upon proportions and at distances from each other governed by what is called Bode's Law.

Third, the suns and their planets are all made of the same substances so that suns of the same size, age (heat or brightness) will have the same constitution and their planets will be about the same size, the same distance away and apart, and be composed of the same substances and in the same proportions. All together will have the same life-histories.

Fourth, there are estimated to be at least 400,000 million suns identical to ours *in our*

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Galaxy alone. There are apparently endless galaxies, all having the same basic constitution as ours. Each star in all of them of the same size and age as our sun has a third planet made of the same stuff as our Earth. Ergo, there are almost countless "earths" just like ours in the present Universe.

However, either stars are being created all the time or all stars are not quite the same age. This means that some earths are older than ours; others of the same age; others, again, younger.

Now consider one more thing—Life.

What is Life? We define it as something that is not inanimate, *i.e.* we call it animate. But we are hard put to it to draw a line between these two concepts and we can define neither. A stone is said to be inanimate, a dog animate; but what to do with a crystal which does everything an animate entity does—it is born, it eats, it grows, it excretes, it reproduces, it is subject to diseases, and it dies—or certain bacteriophages that are animate in one phase of their "lives", and crystalline (or inanimate) in another? Yet, something we call "life" exists on this planet, and one form of it, at least, we call intelligent. How did it start?

Let us forget for a moment all our little personal shibboleths and our great traditional concepts and try to be practical. Matter can exist in three basic material forms—gaseous, liquid, and solid. There is a state between a gas and a liquid and between a liquid and a solid. The latter is called a *colloid.* The earth is a solid surrounded by a liquid skin, covered by a gaseous envelope. Colloids exist between the solid and the liquid, and sooner or later, among these colloids certain combinations of elements in certain mixtures must come together in time. These are of a nature that automatically *combine* to produce ever more complex substances ending in what chemists call *proteins.*

Now, proteins automatically display certain strange properties, or automatic behaviours that are what we have designated *evidences of life.* Thus, what we call Life is but a fourth form of Matter. Further, it is an automatic outcome of the combination of sundry substances in special circumstances. These circumstances have come about on this Planet. There are countless other planets going around other "suns" identical to Earth. The same thing most probably happened there also.

But consider the primitive proteins everywhere! Not all blobs of them were quite the same—they varied, yet they combined. With variation we get more variation or, automatically, Evolution — the complex plus the complex, giving rise to the ever-more

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complex until you hit *Protoplasm.* Already the blob is "alive"; it reproduces; it grows in bulk and in complexity. And the next thing you have is an *Organism.* It develops a nervous system. This gets so complex it has to have a central control-box, and you have a brain.

And once you have a brain, chum, you are apparently in line for an *Intelligence.* Whether we like it or not, both "life" and so-called "evolution", giving rise eventually to "intelligence", could and probably have arisen quite spontaneously, mechanically, and continuously on an endless number of heavenly bodies. Moreover, despite the limited number of natural elements, and thus of combinations of same (however numerous) this need not have happened only between 0° and 100° C. on a planet such as ours, and with proteins or other hydrocarbons as basic building blocks. How do we know that, for instance, the rare earths may not form chain molecules under other conditions, such as carbon and silicon do in ours?

To sum up, therefore, and to answer our third question, let it be stated without fear that intelligent life, like or unlike us, founded materially on hydrocarbons or other combinations of natural elements, could and probably does exist on other (and almost innumerable other) planets revolving around other suns of the same size and age as ours in this and countless other galaxies. Any number of these intelligent life-forms may be very like us, others may be quite unlike, some totally different (though there is a thing called parallel-evolution, even on this earth). Also, they may be of our "age", younger, or older—being maybe hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands, millions, hundreds of millions, or septrillions of years older.

We started making "machines", say, ten thousand years ago; we first flew in balloons 150 years ago, in power planes 45 years ago; we are approaching space-flight. What about those Intelligent Entities evolved on another "Earth" 100 million years ago? Doubtless they invented machines to go cruising about space and time.

Perhaps they have been searching for others at their intellectual level; perhaps they are studying primitive cultures; perhaps they go around planting colonies or establishing breeding farms. Perhaps they are totally indifferent. Perhaps they are quite mad. What, indeed, could *not* pilot a UFO?

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will power

by JAMES W. TURNER

The phone had gone dead. Stanton looked like a man in a trance. Suddenly Lia began to sob, her head bowed. . . .

I WAS SITTING at my prop desk in studio C waiting for the director to give me the "on the air" signal. Paul Kemp's wife, Lia, and Herbert Stanton were sitting nearby against the wall while the cameramen and technicians got everything in readiness for the telecast.

Lia had startling white blond hair above transparent blue eyes set off by the pink cream skin of Nordic women. Her cheek bones were too high and her mouth too generous for real beauty but she brought visions of wind and snow and cool fathomless northern lakes.

It was probably Herbert Stanton nervously clasping and unclasping his pudgy hands as he rocked forward and back in his chair that snapped me from my reverie in time to see the director signal ten seconds. A hush descended over the studio and I affixed a mechanical smile and faced camera one. The red light flicked on and I started.

"Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. This is Robert Carlyle bringing you as a

James W. Turner, a new writer in this field and Senior Project Engineer with a major aviation firm, has written a dramatic and effective story built around what happens during man's first attempt to circle the globe, more than three hundred miles above its surface, and then return ....

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public service of your TV networks a complete account of what could be one of the most dramatic moments in history."

I swiveled around to face camera two as its red light summoned me.

"This will be man's first attempt to leave the earth, circle the globe more than 300 miles above its surface and return, in a manned rocket."

I paused for a moment.... consulted my notes and the clock on the wall.

"In twenty minutes, at exactly 8:22 PM, this fifteenth day of August 1958, Paul Kemp will have completed the count down from within the rocket ship K-12 which will be the signal for the blast off."

At a signal from the control room I again faced camera one so I could keep my eyes on the monitor that showed what was going out on the air. Timing was important now.

"We are going to bring you an on the spot pick-up from Palomara Beach, Florida where the launching will take place."

The monitor showed the sleek K-12 looking more like a gleaming toy in the failing sunlight rather than an actual spaceship standing there seemingly unattended on the sand with the white flecked Atlantic in the background. As soon as my picture was back on the monitor, I continued.

"In the studio we have a slave radar set that will show you the exact position of the rocket relative to the earth as it is observed by the various radar stations spotted around the globe."

In the four corners of the monitor screen around my picture suddenly appeared shots of radar stations in Europe, Asia, China and Central America plus a view of the radar set and control panel in our studio.

"We also have Herbert Stanton, vice president in charge of engineering at C.C.A. Aircraft, the company financing this project as part of its participation in the International Geophysical Year."

As Stanton appeared on the monitor, I could see droplets of perspiration on his face.

"And finally," I lowered my voice, an old radio and TV trick to give the impression that something intimate was to follow, "we have Mrs. Kemp. The woman who saw her man put in concentration camps by the Germans, slave labor camps by the Russians. Saw him reviled by the American press and discredited by congressional investigating committees. This may well be her hour of triumph as well as Paul Kemp's. Practically every scientist of note has gone on record to say that

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based on the fuel to mass ratio of his space ship, Paul Kemp will achieve a maximum altitude of 150 miles and reach a top velocity of 10,000 miles an hour; far short of that required to circle the globe in a free orbit.

"Mr. Stanton, who you saw on your screens a moment ago, feels that Mr. Kemp is in the right. He has placed the complete resources of C.A.A. Aircraft at his disposal. And Mr. Kemp is gambling his life that innumerable crashes, explosions and unspectacular flights of his previous unmanned space ships, both here and in Europe were either freaks, accidents or both."

The floor manager assisted Mrs. Kemp to a chair at my desk just out of camera range. At a signal from the director, I faced camera two and the red light signaled that we were both on camera.

"Mrs. Kemp, it has been inferred by many news agencies that while your husband worked on an intercontinental missile for the Germans that he was an ardent Nazi. Can you shed any light on that phase of his career?"

She didn't look at me. In fact she didn't appear to be looking at the TV camera but rather through it, and possibly along the miles of coaxial cable to Florida where she hoped her husband could see her. An urgency was in her voice that normally was very melodic because of the faint foreign accent.

"Paul has never been anything but an ardent scientist. Politics and the foolishness and greed of nations have never interested him in any way. He has devoted his whole life to man's conquest of space. He breathes life into the machines which he works, why should he want to destroy life...any life?"

"Well, Mrs. Kemp, why after what I understand were some outstanding successes, did he lose favor with the Nazis?"

"Each test that he ran went well but whenever they tried an actual launching, it failed. They accused him of sabotage and sent him to a concentration camp."

Here her voice dropped somewhat and she looked at her hands rather than towards the camera.

"They starved him, they tortured him to make him say that he had furnised false data. His silence seemed to anger them more and they tried harder and harder."

"Mrs. Kemp we've heard reports from other prisoners that were in the same camp as your husband that throughout the tortures, even as they branded him, he never cried out, never winced, in fact showed no outward sign of pain. Would you say that was an exaggeration?"

"It is no exaggeration."

I waited for her to say

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more but her eyes dropped back to gazing at her hands.

"I understand almost the same circumstances repeated themselves when he was liberated by the Russians and went to work for them."

Again I waited for her to reply but she only raised her eyes to the camera and once more seemed to be looking through it.

"Is it true Mrs. Kemp that your husband was submitted to some of the most inhuman tortures the Russians could devise without eliciting a confession from him of the same things that the Nazis accused him?"

She still seemed to be gazing through camera two and her voice became throaty as she said, "Paul has tremendous will power."

The director signaled me back to camera one and I addressed my unseen audience of millions.

"The same bad luck or, if you will, circumstances followed Paul Kemp when he escaped to this country. Every experimental or test stand launching fulfilled his predictions but just as consistently, every actual launching resulted in failure, sometimes at the cost of millions of dollars worth of equipment. As a result of the findings of the Dunbar Committee, Mr. Kemp was declared a security risk and relieved of all duty with the Naval Research Laboratory. It seemed that he was doomed to obscurity."

While I was talking, Mrs. Kemp had been conducted back to her chair against the wall and Herbert Stanton had been seated next to me. As camera two's red light came on again, I faced the heavy set, perspiring man with his steel gray hair in a crew cut.

"Mr. Stanton, what made you risk the tremendous amount of money that your company has invested in this space ship considering what is known of Mr. Kemp's background?"

He gripped the arms of his chair and looked at me almost defiantly.

"The man himself, Mr. Carlyle. True, I've watched test stand launchings and they were impressive. I've reviewed his calculations and they check out with room to spare for any test data errors. But it's his dedication that impresses you. When he says that he'll take off at 8:22 and start circling the globe; he'll do it. If he said that he intended to do it on a broomstick, I'd be inclined to say that it was possible."

"That's quite a compliment sir, coming from one of your scientific stature," I said with a smile.

I hurriedly swung back to camera one as I got the signal that Paul Kemp had started the count down in Florida. The monitor showed the gleaming hull of the K-12 outlined against the gray sky

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and the darker water. This particular time of day had been chosen because it offered the best opportunity of watching the ascent into space for the longest time without the aid of radar....if such an ascent were to take place. To dramatize the moment I started counting backwards as I imagined Paul Kemp was doing inside the rocket.

"Eight .... seven .... six .... five .... four .... three .... two .... one..... zero."

I leaned forward anxiously watching the monitor. Nothing happened. The ground power cable was still plugged into the nose of the rocket and its length slowly swayed with the motion of the breeze.

Against the wall where Lia and Stanton were seated, I heard an eruption. It was Stanton.

"You damn fool," he roared, "he doesn't start the count down at ten seconds. He starts it at one minute. What are you trying to do, drive us all crazy?"

Obviously his tirade was not picked up by the overhead mike because there were no frantic signals from the director in the control booth. I ad libbed quickly.

"Now all power has been applied and we are waiting for Mr. Kemp to ignite the liquid fuel rockets."

Almost as if on my signal, flames began to spurt out the rear of the space ship and press against the ground. The ground power cable shot out of the side of the nose of the ship and plummeted groundward. Slowly, ponderously, the rocket seemed to shake itself loose from its framework. I expected to see the ship tear up into the sky at a blinding rate but instead it slowly, almost foot by foot, fought clear of the ground and began to rise. But it was rising. I glanced at Lia to see how she was reacting. She had her eyes on the TV monitor and a look of intense concentration was on her face. Her full red lips were moving. A silent prayer I imagined. Stanton sat back in his chair wiping his forehead. He seemed to have complete confidence now that the initial obstacle had been overcome.

It had been nearly two hours since Paul Kemp had blasted off and established in a slightly elliptical orbit about 300 miles above the earth's surface. We had watched him make one complete orbit on the radar screen and he was now due to come closer to the surface of the earth to use some of its air resistance for braking power. The idea was for the space ship to perform somewhat like a stone skipping along the surface of a pond. Whenever the braking air made the space ship's surfaces too hot, Paul was to pull up into an area of less

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air until the surfaces cooled and it was safe to re-enter the atmosphere. He also had enough spare fuel to slow the rocket down by a reverse thrust. The room for this extra fuel had been found by leaving the complicated and bulky electronic brain necessary to perform the rapid calculations to guide the K-12 on the ground. Paul transmitted the information by talking into a special form of audiophone that translated the readings into code signals that left punch marks on a tape on the ground which in turn was fed into the electronic brain. After the calculations were complete, they were sent back to Paul by radio, either by direct signal or bounced off the moon, depending on which side of the earth he was on.

I noticed Stanton anxiously watching the dials on the panel to the right of the radar screen. When properly interpreted, they told Paul's speed, acceleration, distance above the earth, and much more information that told Stanton if everything was going as scheduled. I reported his anxious look to my TV audience who for the last thirty minutes had been treated to my being on camera practically all the time. We interspersed shots of the various radar stations and the radar screen showing the K-12's progress but the director, realizing that they lacked sustaining interest, kept switching back to me hoping I could bring some drama into a situation that was becoming similar to reporting a routine airplane flight.

When I noticed an angry look cross Stanton's face, I swung my desk mike in his direction.

"What's the damn fool trying to do?" we picked up. I didn't try to kill the mike. This was just what we needed to inject some life into the telecast. I whispered into the mike in a conspiratorial voice, "Something seems to be wrong. Mr. Stanton is watching the K-12's velocity. It's increasing and Mr. Stanton doesn't seem to like this at all." I raised my voice now to its natural level and called, "Mr. Stanton? I see the space ship's velocity is increasing. What does this mean sir?"

He looked at me as if he could wring my neck, cast an anxious glance at Lia, and resignedly turned back to me. The director quickly switched to camera two to get us both on the air.

"It means that idiot is using his reserve fuel to accelerate further out into space. He's enlarging his orbit and making it more elliptical. In that way he'll get more and better data and pictures....to increase our scientific knowledge," he finished flatly.

I was puzzled and I told him so. "I don't see what's wrong with that. His main

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purpose up there is to gather data. What's wrong with getting more?"

Stanton answered me slowly, emphasizing each word, "What's he s u p p o s e d to breathe? He had enough oxygen to take him once around the earth and p r o b a b l y through a landing. Oxygen was the one item on which he didn't allow any margin for error. He can jettison all the cameras and apparatus and they'll get back to earth safely by means of timed parachutes, but he has to stay with the ship to live. Look at that," Stanton said jabbing his stubby finger at one of the dials, "he only has enough oxygen for about one hour."

Stanton paused for a moment in thought and then turning to me said imperatively, "You've got a direct telephone line from here to the launching site haven't you?"

"Yes," I replied, "we didn't want to take a chance on going through the regular telephone exchanges to get the flight information and the signals for our slave radar set. Why?"

"Hook in a phone for me, I'm going to try to communicate directly with him. He'll be able to hear us but will only be able to answer by code signals that will have to be translated by the computer in Florida and then relayed to us."

The director in our control room signalled me that he would take care of everything so I kept Stanton on mike while we waited for the arrangements to be completed.

"Mr. Stanton," I asked, "how is it that we will be able to talk to him directly but that he can only answer in code?"

Stanton fidgetted as if he couldn't wait to talk to Paul Kemp and answered in a desultory manner. "It takes much less power to transmit a CW or code signal than one containing voice frequencies. Power is no problem for us on the ground but it is for Paul up there."

At this point Lia called to Stanton and he went into a huddle with her against the wall. As I recapped the situation for our TV audience, I occasionally sneaked a glance at them to see if anything interesting or worthwhile reporting would come of their conference. At first Lia appeared to be begging Stanton to make Paul come back immediately but then Stanton started talking very earnestly to her. Every now and again she would agree animatedly with what he said and then seem to add some comments of her own.

One of the studio technicians plugged in an extension phone at my desk and when I glanced at the director, I saw that he had a phone in his hand and was signalling me that the c o n n e c t i o n was

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through to Florida. I beckoned to Stanton.

"Mr. Stanton the line is open to Florida."

He hurried to my side and camera two was switched on. He gave some hurried instructions to whoever was at the other end of the line that ended with him asking for the signal the moment Paul was in free orbit and didn't need guidance information from the ground.

"Mr. Stanton, do you really believe that Paul Kemp is such a dedicated scientist that he would give up his life just to get more information about....about...." I groped for a word, "space." I finished incredulously.

Stanton was no longer the neverous man waiting for the blast off nor the anxious one of a few moments before as he answered me in a slow, firm voice.

"Mr. Carlyle, obviously you have never met Paul personally....and this is regrettable. What other man would have endured the physical pain, the calumny, not to mention the technical difficulties he had to cope with, to get man off the surface of the earth and into space? Now he has accomplished that. He feels that his mission is complete. The only thing he believes that he can contribute further is the slight amount more knowledge that he can accumulate by using his remaining oxygen to stay up there that much longer. Even his love for his wife," Stanton glanced compassionately at Lia seated forlornly against the wall, "has never been allowed to interrupt his research and I'm certain no appeal along those lines would dissuade him now."

"Mr. Stanton." I interrupted, "if all this is so, you have myself and I'm sure our TV audience across the nation on the edge of our seats wondering how you will prevail upon him to turn back."

Stanton now leaned forward and resting his elbows on the edge of the desk formed a triangle with his extended fingers and looking into camera two, addressed it as if he were lecturing at one of the many societies of which he was a member.

"Paul Kemp has an amazing gift that I've suspected for some time. His flight today and some of the things that Mrs. Kemp has just told me verify it beyond any reasonable doubt."

He turned quickly towards me and snapped. "Do you believe in mental telepathy?"

"Well I'm not sure," I answered slowly. "Naturally I've heard about a lot of experiments and there are a couple of performers on TV that...." I trailed off uncertainly.

Stanton put both his palms flat on my desk and leaned towards me almost belligerantly.

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"The experiments are not to prove the existence of thought transference. This is a proven fact. They are to test the extent and under what conditions; to determine who are the best transmitters and the best subjects. Further, it has been proven," he continued seemingly carried away with his enthusiasm, "that man's mind can influence inanimate objects. The throwing of dice, the flipping of a coin, no longer follow the laws of probability when concentrated on by certain people."

I had to admit that I was puzzled. "What has all this to do with Paul Kemp up there hurtling through space at over 20,000 miles an hour?" I asked.

"Everything," Stanton snapped, "just consider what has happened during his research. Based on tests that he observed, personally, Paul developed his formulas. He personally witnessed all test stand launchings in Germany ....in Russia....and here. They were all successful. When an actual launching took place and he was not present....everything went wrong. Based on data that he took and that I observed, he designed a space ship that today took off and did exactly as he predicted, yet no other scientist could duplicate his data. Still they all agreed that if everything performed as he said it would, he would be the first man in space. They never said his calculations, based on data, were wrong. They said the data itself was wrong."

As I began to show some comprehension, he hurried on.

"Don't you see? The mind of man can't make material things do the impossible. But if a coin can just as easily come up heads or tails when it is flipped, man's mind can influence the action and make it come out the way he wills it.

"Pain can be alleviated by reactions that take place in our body. Concentration can make these reactions more effective, hence, Paul's seeming insensitive to torture."

"It sounds reasonable," I said hesitantly, "I'm sure many members of our TV audience have had experiences at one time or another that would seem to fall into the category that you've mentioned."

Now that he was started, there was no stopping him and as I glanced at our director in the control room, I got the signal to let him continue. The TV audience must really be eating it up I thought.

"Just this evening," Stanton continued, "Mrs. Kemp had a minor accident with Paul's car on the way to the studio. Paul was warned months ago to get new brake linings. He always drove the car and the brakes worked perfectly, so he did nothing

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about them. This evening, with Mrs. Kemp driving, the brakes failed completely. When the garage man examined them, he said there was hardly a thread of lining left on each drum."

He paused and continued slowly, emphasizing each word. "As long as Paul was present, they held. Without him....they failed. Mrs. Kemp was also telling me about...."

The telephone on the desk rang once and Stanton grabbed it and started bellowing instructions into the mouthpiece. I pushed the desk mike closer to him and backed out of range of the camera. After a few encouraging words, I escorted Mrs. Kemp to my chair. I figured that the drama now to be enacted could be best handled with the two principals on camera and me as an off stage voice, so I joined the director in the control room.

We decided on a split screen transmission, with Stanton and Lia on the lower portion and the radar screen showing Paul's flight path in the upper left and a close-up shot of the oxygen dial in the upper right hand corner. I explained to the viewing audience that Stanton was making the necessary arrangements to contact Paul Kemp directly and have his reply decoded by the computer and relayed to us. We turned up the sound on Stanton's mike as he began.

"Paul, this is Herbert Stanton. I have Lia with me. We know what you intend to do but you mustn't. If not for Lia's sake, for the contribution you can make to science."

He went on to outline tersely, using many scientific terms that I couldn't quite follow, what he had explained to me and the audience previously concerning Paul's supposed mental power.

He finished by appealing, "Think what your power can do for scientific endeavor. It appears that under your mental influence, anything can be made to operate more efficiently. By studying that mode of operation, we can duplicate it....without the further need of your will power. You can help the world to advance decades in a few years. The world of science needs you Paul."

Stanton held the phone on the cradle for a few seconds and then picked it up again. He gave instructions to ring as soon as Paul's answer came through. Putting down the phone he turned to Lia and consoling her he said it would take a few minutes for Paul's answer to get through. There was no need to send any of my bantering dialogue out on the air to accompany the picture of the two anxious faces of Stanton and Lia and the

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dot on the radar screen showing Paul's position as the dial on the oxygen gauge inexorably moved closer to zero. Everyone in the studio, and across the nation I imagined, waited with bated breath for the ring of the phone.

The raucous jangle of the phone two minutes later caused us all to jump but I frantically motioned Stanton to hold the receiver close to the microphone on the desk in front of him. We all leaned forward with Lia to catch every word.

The voice was the flat unemotional monotone of a technician in Florida reading from the tape as it came from the electric typewriter powered by the computer.

"Stanton. Your reasoning is very logical and I'm inclined to believe that something of the sort is probably true. Can't understand why I never thought of it myself. Would have saved me a lot of soul searching after the failures when I couldn't explain them. Agree with you that in the interest of science I should come back. Would like to but afraid it's too late. Note oxygen gauge. Computer reports three hours necessary to land. Enough oxygen for twenty minutes. Propose cut way down on oxygen. Allow self to black out. Will set timer for automatic release of oxygen after three minutes. Should not be dangerous. Will extend flight time considerably. Get more information. Tell Lia. Love her very much. Regret neglect. Someday. Somewhere."

The phone went dead. Stanton didn't move. He looked like a man in a trance. Lia dropped her head on her hands and started to sob. Suddenly she grasped Stanton's arm and pleaded, "Let me talk to him....if only for the last time."

Stanton ran his fingers through his cropped hair and quietly gave the necessary instructions. Lia caressed rather than gripped the phone. There were no tears now. The melodic twang caused by her accent was back in Lia's voice.

"Paul, please have no regrets. I've loved you for what you are. I would have had it no other way. I just wanted you to know that I think, I'm not sure, but I think you are leaving someone behind to carry on your work. An heir for your talents. I love you darling."

Stanton hung up the phone for her and put his arm around her shoulder.

The hushed voice with which I addressed the TV audience now was no broadcasting gimmick.

"It appears that Paul Kemp has vindicated his name. Yes, vindicated and emblazoned it in history. Even in his last moments, he is submitting himself to physical torture to procure more information for

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our scientists who will carry on after him. His heir, if there is to be one, will certainly have a proud heritage."

The oxygen dial was now being transmitted by itself for viewing by millions across the country. Where before it had moved slowly but surely, now its movement, if at all, was imperceptable. Lia was seated resignedly with her hands clasped in her lap watching the monitor with Stanton.

Two minutes ticked by. Three. Five. Eight. Ten. The dial was moving but ever so slightly....not like before. I explained to the audience that after three minutes the dial should have started moving as it had previously. There was no use asking Stanton for an explanation because his expression showed his concern like the rest of us. I left the control booth and joined Stanton and Lia at the desk. Twelve minutes had elapsed and still no change in the movement of the dial. I seated myself in range of camera two and was preparing to ask Stanton if he thought something could have gone wrong with the oxygen supply when the phone range imperiously. Stanton snatched it from its cradle and we all listened to the voice in the flat monotone that relayed Paul's message.

"Cut oxygen to one-tenth normal. Waited for black-out. Some uncomfortable feeling. No black-out. Surmise body is able to operate on much lower oxygen intake. Backs up Stanton theory of more efficient operation. Still just a theory but have been subsisting on one-tenth oxygen supply for eight minutes now. Will try to come in. If Stanton theory correct should make it."

Here the technician's voice hesitated and then continued but more slowly.

"Must get back. Must make study to see if will power characteristic is inherited by child or can be taught. Will submit self to exhaustive test."

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the beholders

by BERTRAM CHANDLER

What would be your reaction if you not only saw a Flying Saucer but talked, or imagined you talked, to the pilot?

"THERE is *something* behind the flying saucer stories," said Manderley. "Not all of them, I grant you that. I am willing to admit the usual quota of motor car headlights reflected from low clouds, met. Balloons and, even, Venus at her brightest. I could tell you a true story about *that*—the officers of a large transport that had got out of Singapore one jump ahead of the Japanese saw Venus during the day, at about eleven o'clock in the morning, through a break in the clouds, and assumed that it was a Japanese observation balloon or blimp. Then the panic started.

"Anyhow," Manderley started ticking off his points on the fingers of his right hand, "we know this much about the saucers. Firstly—they can be seen. Secondly—they can be photographed. Thirdly—they can be picked up by radar. Fourthly—they've been knocking around for one helluva long time."

"And *that*," said Scrivens, "is the weak point in your arguments. They have been knocking around a long time. You've read Charles Fort, as we all have, and you know

Bertram Chandler, noted British SF writer, returns with this unique—though perhaps mildly cynical—explanation for the contradictory reports of those who, up to now, have told of meeting and talking with men and women from other planets who were visiting here in Flying Saucers.

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that his books are full of accounts of strange lights in the sky way back in the Nineteenth Century, and before. These lights in the sky have been knocking around for a long time. In the days before flying they were assumed by the credulous to be of supernatural origin. When Man first took to the air, they were assumed to be big dirigible airships on secret trials. In these days, when space travel is just around the corner, they are assumed to be spaceships manned by extraterrans. And here's a rather interesting point—some observers see them as 'saucers'—just because they are so conditioned by the word itself—others, notably airline pilots and the like—see them as fairly conventional r o c k e t ships. But it all boils down to this. Somebody—he may be a country bumpkin, he may be a 't r a i n e d observer'—sees a light in the sky that he cannot account for. His imagination goes to work. If he knows nothing of astronautics he sees a huge, spinning disc. If he has read a few articles on rocketry he sees a rocket."

"That B. O. A. C. air liner captain didn't see either," Manderley pointed out. "Too—he saw his saucers by daylight. And they were neither flying discs nor rockets—they w e r e changing shape the whole time."

"Clouds," said Scrivens. "Or some sort of mirage—a distorted reflection, possibly, of his own aircraft."

"Your trouble," said Manderley, "is that you can't forget that you're a past president of the Astronautics Society, that you've made your name (and your living) writing books—and good ones, I admit—on rocketry. You've got to the stage where you neither would nor could believe in a spaceship unless (a) it were a rocket and (b) had been designed by the bright boys of the Society..."

"*Your* trouble, Bill," replied Scrivens, "is that you aren't a *real* science fiction writer. You've always tended towards fantasy. You've always hankered after the rich and strange—and when science gets in the way... Well, it's just too bad for science."

"Fantasy *does* become science eventually," said Manderley. "What about Rhine, and psionics?"

"Psionics is not a science—yet. But you're very silent, Susan. What are your views on the flying saucers?"

His hostess smiled.

"Am I supposed to have any, Arthur? You and Bill are the science fiction writers—and if I hadn't met Bill I'd never have known that such a thing as science fiction existed..."

"If you'd never met Bill you'd still have read about flying saucers," said Scrivens. "For the purposes of this argument you're the intelligent laywoman. Bill and I both

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have a certain bias. You haven't. What *are* your views?"

"Well," she said, "I've read Adamski's first book, and I've read Allingham's book..."

"Bill," cried Scrivens, "don't you supervise this woman's reading?"

"Bill got the books," said Susan Manderley.

"From the library," said her husband. "I had no intention of buying them. I wanted to read 'em myself—out of curiosity."

"All right, you read 'em," said Scrivens. "It can't be helped now. What did you make of them?"

"This is going to hurt," said Susan. "Bill's not the only writer in the family—I've done my share, you know. I can recognize sincerity when I see it, when I read it. I'm quite convinced that both Adamski and Allingham *did* meet the men from the flying saucers."

"Susan!" cried Manderley. "You can't say that!"

"Can't I?" she asked sweetly. "I am saying it."

"But the absurdity of it all. Just consider the facts—the biological facts. Life on this world has evolved to suit Earthly conditions. Allingham's saucermen were, according to Allingham, Martians—yet they were, according to Allingham, human. Just consider the inferior mass of Mars, the thin atmosphere, the aridity. Intelligent life *may* have evolved—but it'd be something suited to those conditions. Adamski's saucermen—and women—came from Venus. We don't know much about conditions there—but they will, certainly, be wildly dissimilar from those on Earth. Life will have evolved to suit *those* conditions."

"There was that other crank in the U.S.A.," said Scrivens, "who started the story about the little men—but *men*, mark you—three feet tall who were found in a crashed saucer."

"All right," said the girl. "You write about Martians and Venusians, don't you? All right, Arthur—I'll let *you* off. The only Martians and Venusians in *your* stories are the descendants of the original Earth colonists. But you, Bill, have a decided fancy for Venusians built on the same lines as Disney's almost-human frogs. And I seem to remember that you peopled Mars with an intelligent plant. Don't argue—you did. Are your frogmen any more probable than Adamski's Venusians? Is your thinking Virginia Creeper any more likely than Allingham's Martians?" She was warming up nicely. "The whole damn' trouble with you science fiction writers (I didn't know the breed until I married one) is that you think that you *know*. Oh, you read reference books—I admit that. You read Hoyle's latest book on astronomy, and you're very impressed by his theories, especially those

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about Venus. I remember that you bored me with a long dissertation about the—according to Hoyle—seas of mineral oil and clouds of oily smog. Yet you still make Venus a lush, watery, jungly sort of world in your stories—and you will do so until you get round to writing a story about a line of interplanetary oil tankers. The same with Mars—you just *love* the canals. It doesn't matter if they were dug by that highly improbable intelligent plant of yours, or by some long-dead race who left all sorts of intriguing artifacts and ruins behind 'em—but canals you must have. Yet, when somebody like Adamski or Allingham flouts *your* conventions you're up in arms against him."

"You'll be saying that you believe WORLDS IN COLLISION next," sneered Manderley.

"And why shouldn't I if I want to?"

"Why not, darling? You read it in *The Reader's Digest*, so it must be true." He turned to Scrivens. "How any intelligent woman can read that rag just beats me."

"I could make a few remarks about *your* reading habits," said Susan. "The magazines that you bring home with half undressed females sprawled all over the front cover and at least half the inside pages!"

"Research," said her husband. "Research."

"Research be damned. You're just a dirty old man before your time. If you took as much interest..." She broke off suddenly. "I don't know what you think of us, Arthur."

"And it all started with flying saucers," he grinned. "It's a good job we're drinking sherry and not tea—otherwise there might be some *real* flying saucers!"

It was a feeble joke, but it eased the tension. Scrivens looked at his watch.

"We said we'd be out at Keith's by seven thirty," he said. "We'd better get moving."

Susan sat in the front seat with Scrivens. Manderley, sitting by himself at the back, was inclined to sulk. This, he thought, is a habit of which I shall have to cure myself. Yet—let us face the facts—things aren't what they were between Susan and myself. Not in any way. We've gone off the rails somewhere. Our dreams just haven't come true. Tonight's silly quarrel was symptomatic of what is happening—this flaring up over an absurd thing like a discussion of flying saucers...

He stared out of the window at the countryside through which they were passing. He forced his thoughts away from the morbidly subjective channel that they had been following. He thought, there is not much traffic on tonight.

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The evening was fine and clear. Low in the west hung a crescent moon with, just above it, the shimmering point of light that was Venus. The trees were black silhouettes against the pale, but darkening, blue of the sky.

But Venus is a morning star at this time of the year... thought Manderley. That's not Venus. And it's moving... An aeroplane? No, it can't be...

"Arthur," he said suddenly. "You're in the know. *Has* anybody put up an artificial satellite yet?"

"No, although we don't really know what's going on behind the Iron Curtain. Why?"

"What's that thing in the sky, then? Above the new moon and a little to the right... Coming this way..."

Scrivens stopped the car suddenly.

"This," he said tensely, "we must see. God, what I'd give for a camera! But note every detail, both of you! Every detail!"

"I can hear it now," said Manderley. "A humming noise, like a giant bee..."

"No," Scrivens contradicted him. "That's rocket drive. You could never mistake that peculiar, screaming roar for anything else..."

"I can't hear anything," said the girl.

The thing was approaching fast. Manderley strained his eyes, began to make out details. He saw the gleaming, lenticulate hull, rimmed with pale fire and, as it tilted for the descent, the dome on top of it that must house the control room. The thing was flying low, and it was huge, and as it swept directly overhead it blotted out the sky. Silently it landed behind the car, blocking the road and crushing the hedges on either side of it.

"What do we do now?" asked Manderley. "Drive like hell to the nearest town, make our report and get ourselves laughed at by the whole world, and especially by those in the same trade as ourselves?"

"I'm getting out of the car," said Scrivens. "I want to meet whoever—or whatever—is piloting this thing."

"Is this wise?" asked Susan.

"As wise as running away would be—wiser perhaps."

"I'm coming with you," said Manderley. To his wife he said, "Stay in the car. If any sort of hell starts popping—get out of here fast!"

"What do you take me for?" she demanded. There was a flash of shapely legs as she eased herself from the seat, then she was standing on the road with the two men.

Manderley didn't see any door open in the side of the saucer—yet, suddenly, standing on the road and facing them was a being. He could not be sure of its actual shape,

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—it was encased in a dull-gleaming armour with an opaque, featureless helmet that must be, Manderley decided, a spacesuit. It stood, as it were, on a tripod—was the third limb another leg, or a tail like that of a kangaroo?

Inside his head a voice was speaking.

We come in peace. We are from the fourth planet of the sun that you call Antares. We have been seeking for a suitable ambassador, one of your species, who can represent us on this planet...

"But I'm not qualified," said Manderley aloud.

You are. You are not a scientist—yet you know something of science. And you have imagination.

Manderley glanced at the others.

Scrivens, he saw to his amazement, was talking too. He listened to the incredible words.

"Of course I shall do my best to have the fault in your rocket motors repaired— I'm not without influence, you know. Payment? Well—if you insist... A trip to the Moon and back..."

The voice in Manderley's mind, the voice that had been speaking with such clarity, died to a mumble. He looked at his wife. She was not speaking, but her lips were parted, and there was a look on her face that he had not seen for a long time, for too long a time. He saw her step forward, her arms open to embrace the being in the spacesuit.

Manderley shouted. He caught the girl with his left hand, flung her behind him. With his right fist he swung a blow at the helmeted head. But he met no resistance, and the impetus of his action sent him sprawling on to the roadway. Dimly he was aware that his wife was kneeling beside him, dimly he was aware that the saucer had lifted, was hanging above them. He tensed his body for the killing impact of whatever sort of weapon the aliens might use.

They were helping him to his feet then—Scrivens and Susan. Scrivens was furious. He pointed a shaking hand to where the strange visitant was now no more than a fainter star among the faint stars, a tiny, drifting speck of light vanishing in the vast reaches of the darkling sky.

"What did you think you were doing?" he shouted. "So much we might have learned! The secrets of space travel within our grasp—and you had to attack an inoffensive being half your size and frighten him away!"

"Not so fast," said Manderley. "Tell me—what did *you* see? What did *you* hear?"

"A rocket, of course. A big rocket. An airlock door on its side opened, and a man—I'll

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call him that—came out. He was about three feet tall, and heavily furred (I don't think it was clothing). He had a face rather like that of a wise cat. He seemed to be feeling the heat rather badly and was having t r o u b l e with his breathing. He communicated by some form of telepathy, and told me that he was the captain of the first rocket from Mars to the Earth, and that he had not intended to make a landing but that the rocket motors were giving trouble. He asked our help in repairing them..."

"A rocket..." said Manderley. "Then why weren't we incinerated when it took off? Look at the asphalt of the road—unmarked!"

"You're right. What did *you* see?"

"A saucer. A huge, lenticulate disc, of metal construction. I *thought* that it crushed the hedges on either side of the road when it landed—but the hedges look untouched. And the thing that came out of it was in a spacesuit, and it either had three legs or two legs and a tail. It was a telepath. It told me that it came from Antares IV and that it was looking for some suitable Earthman to act as the agent for its race here on Earth. Then I saw Susan walking into its arms, and..."

"But what do you make of it, Bill?"

"You know the old saying—Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. It's the same with flying saucers. Adamski's was manned—and I use the word deliberately—by Venusians. I suppose that he had some sort of fancy for the planet Venus—but not the scientific education to realize that a Venusian could not possibly be human. A l l i n g h a m ' s saucer was manned by Martians—and the same applied to him. That B. O.A.C. captain probably saw the saucers as they really are—things of c h a n g i n g shape..."

"But why should *my* saucer—even though it was a rocket—have been manned by Martians?" asked Scrivens.

"Because Mars—and not the Moon—is really *the* goal of all you rocketry people. Look at von Braun's *very* detailed plans for the voyage, the landing and the exploration. But let me finish what I was going to say—it's been an idea of mine for some time, but I haven't gotten around to using it yet—which is that the saucers aren't spaceships, but living beings and intelligent ones. Just imagine intelligent creatures living on the floor of the ocean deeps! What would they, what could they, know about us? An occasional wreck might come drifting down, giving rise to all sorts of wild conjectures about *something* living in what would be, to them, a hard vacuum. Well—s u p p o s e that there are beings, as much natives of this world as we are,

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but with the power of making descents to what is, to them, the ocean floor. They might not be life as we know it, they might be mere swirls of energy drawing their life force direct from the sun. They'll have been getting curious about us of late—our high altitude aircraft, balloons and rockets must have got them rather worried. They may—assuming that they are masters of hypnotic technique—have devised a method of finding out just what makes us tick. They come down in some lonely place—and the person to whom they show themselves sees what he expects to see, what he wants to see. No two persons will see the same."

Manderley sat down on the grass verge of the road, pulled his pipe out of his pocket, filled it and lit it.

"What did *you* see, Susan?" he asked quietly.

"It was small," she said quietly. "It was a gleaming, golden bowl rather than a saucer. I don't know how it was propelled or where it came living at stratospheric levels from. And there was a man. He wasn't wearing a spacesuit, and he hadn't got fur—just a man. And he wanted me to come with him to wherever it was that he had come from—west of the moon, perhaps... I don't know."

"And you were going with him," said Manderley.

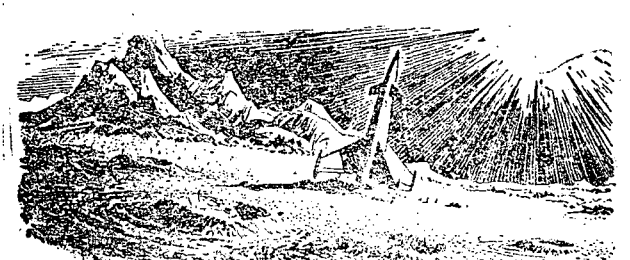
"Yes, I was going with him. Because... Because... Can't you see? Won't you see? Because he was you, as you used to be..."

Manderley relit his pipe. He said nothing.

"And then you—the real you—came between us. (I didn't know, then, that it was some horrible monster you thought you were saving me from...) But it was the real you—and I realized then how much I should lose by flying off with an ideal that never existed, never could exist..."

"I'm going to walk back along the road to that pub we passed," said Scrivens. "I want to use their telephone. You can sit in the car if you like."

They never heard him.



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meet the extra-terrestrial

by ISABEL L. DAVIS

What is the truth about the reports of Saucers landing in various places, the pilots teaching those they meet?

ALL FLYING saucerdom is now divided into two irreconcilable groups. One group believes that human beings have had direct contact and intelligible communication with extraterrestrial beings; the other group rejects all such reports as the product of conscious or unconscious invention.

The split between believers and skeptics is, and should be, a real and permanent one. For to the skeptics, flying saucers still deserve the name of UFOs— *Unidentified* Flying Objects. To the believers, on the other hand, thanks to the extensive information they claim to have received from their extraterrestrial friends, the saucers are no longer UFOs but IFOs— *Identified,* fully identified, Flying Objects. The two terms are mutually exclusive. An object cannot be identified and unidentified at the same time.

The organization to which I belong, Civilian Saucer Intelligence of New York, is among the skeptics. As such, we are accused by the believers of egotism, bias, arro-

Isabel L. Davis, one of the most widely known and respected researchers in Ufology, here analyzes published reports on contacts with extraterrestrials. Active in the field for the past ten years, and a Fortean, she is descended from that 17th century Fortean, Sir Kenelm Digby.

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gance, and mulish cynicism. They say we pre-judge the contact-communication reports and refuse even to examine them. They say we should "keep an open mind," "reserve judgment," give these cases "the benefit of the doubt," "listen to all sides of the question," and always remember that "anything is possible."

These are fine well-sounding phrases; but what about the stories they defend? They are spoken in support of some of the most extraordinary tales that have ever asked credence from the human mind. Yet astonishing as they are, still more astonishing is the fact of their ready, uncritical, and fervent acceptance.

It is the purpose of this article to prove, if possible, that the scepticism I share with others is *not* blind or automatic or arbitrary, but is based on specific, solid objections; to set down, for the record, some of the *reasons* why each successive report of this kind has seemed so conspicuously bogus; and to point out exactly what it is that we are being asked to be open-minded about. There may be some people who are genuinely bewildered by our intransigence. Finally, anything is useful that may help to sharpen the distinction between Unidentified and Identified flying objects.

Needless to say, I am not at all the first to criticize these stories sharply. Many other UFO researchers have pointed out flaws. Not an article but a book could be written about this subject; even in the generous space allowed by *Fantastic Universe*, much more must be omitted than can be included. And still more incongruities remain, I am sure, to be discovered, for there seems to be no end to the contradictions of these cases.

Note that the key word in this controversy is *communication*. Exactly what the skeptics disbelieve must be clearly understood: they reject all cases that involve the *two-way exchange* of ideas or information between earth people and "space people." Other reports of encounters with (possible) extraterrestrials, not involving communication, are in a different category, as I hope to show later.

This article is based on eight books published by six well-known contactee authors, as listed at the end of the article. All six men have lectured extensively about their reported experiences, and some have published other documents, but I will deal chiefly with these books, which are readily accessible to anyone who wants to check my statements.

At first glance these books are very different from each other. George Adamski, who describes himself as "philoso-

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pher, student, teacher, saucer researcher," and allows others to refer to him as "Professor"

Adamski was the first with a full-length book. *Flying Saucers Have Landed,* to which co-author Desmond Leslie of England contributed a long section about flying saucers in ancient and recent literature, was published in Oct. 1953 in the U.S. (in Sept. 1953 in England). It describes Mr. Adamski's two original "contacts" with a Venusian and his "scout ship," the first in the California desert on Nov. 20, 1952, the second at Palomar Gardens, Adamski's home, on Dec. 13, 1952. At the first meeting Adamski took several photographs of the ship and the area where it landed (he was not permitted to photograph the Venusian himself) and gave one plate to his new acquaintance. At the second "contact" the scout ship flew over the Gardens and a hand dropped the plate out of a "porthole" and waved to Adamski. The plate, when examined, seemed to have had the original image erased in order to substitute certain mysterious symbols; these have been differently explained by different interpreters. Similar markings appear on plaster casts of footprints left in the desert soil by the Venusian at the first "meeting"; these casts were made by other persons present that day, who by a fortunate piece of foresight had brought plaster of Paris with them. These "witnesses," however, of whom there were six, did not speak to the "extraterrestrial" themselves; at Adamski's request they remained half a mile to a mile from the meeting-place, but watched through binoculars Adamski's hour-long conversation with his new "friend from space." The talk, which covered many philosophical and scientific points, was conducted with gestures, aided by mental telepathy.

During the next two years, while support for FSHL flourished—together with some sharp criticism—Adamski had several other meetings with men and women from Venus, Saturn, Mars, and elsewhere. These took place, he says in *Inside the Space Ships,* both on earth (where the space Brothers are said to live and work incognito) and in Venusian and Saturnian scout and "mother" ships. He again met his friend of the first "contact," whom he calls "Orthon"; he is not allowed to reveal the true names of these extraterrestrials (at a lecture in New York, before the publication of ISS, Adamski said the Venusian's name was so difficult to pronounce that he never spoke it). ISS describes five such "contacts" in great detail, including excursions into space with Adamski aboard, close-up views of the moon (though it was not feasible for him to

FIG. NO. 2 Fan. Universe No.5

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land), and lengthy philosophical conversations with two great teachers or masters, the coversations conducted in English.

Also described was a sixth contact, when his space friends took photographs of the ships for him (using Adamski's own Polaroid camera which he had brought with him, though unfortunately with insufficient film) as best they could against the radiation of the ships. This important event occurred unexpectedly in April 1955, barely in time for Adamski's report of it, and the photographs, to be included in ISS—which was actually on the press, he tells his readers, when he had the "contact."

All Adamski's visits to the space ships were unaccompanied, even the one on August 23, 1954, when Desmond Leslie—always Adamski's loyal supporter—was in Los Angeles. Leslie was not invited; Adamski says of this curious exclusion: "He knew that I was about to have this contact and was most anxious to be taken with me. While I too hoped for this, the Brothers, for reasons which they did not give, were not able to grant the request. As I look back, I think it was because the nature of some of the things which were shown and explained to me this time were not designed for one without previous contacts."

Adamski's two narratives are characterized by meticulous details about the ships, their occupants, and conditions in the universe; and by the homilies on spiritual subjects from the masters and Brothers— "none of which surprised me," Adamski says, "since I had long been thinking and saying the same things."

But Adamski's experience was apparently not the first of its kind. On May 24, 1952, six months before "Orthon" made the famous footprints, Orfeo Angelucci had begun his friendship with Neptune, Orion, and the "exquisitely beautiful" Lyra. *The Secret of the Saucers* relates many highly-colored and indeed fantastic incidents, including the author's 7-day attack of "amnesia" in Jan. 1953, when his body went about its usual duties; not until September did he "remember" anything —but then a great deal—about the "visit" he made in an "etheric" body to the remains of the planet Lucifer, and the tender conversations there with his two friends. The book is permeated with emotion: tears of affection, regret, and grief are freely shed by all three; and is written in a style impassioned to almost operatic pitch. TSOTS was published in 1955; but earlier that year Orfeo had already said farewell to Lyra— "she who encompassed all love, all compassion and all under-

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standing, and whose radiant eyes were a benediction."

Likewise, all of Truman Bethurum's "contacts" had preceded Adamski's. Beginning July 27 and ending Nov, 2, 1952, Bethurum had 11 meetings on the desert with Captain Aura Rhanes, the "chic petite brunette" who commanded an "Admirals' Scow" and its crew of 32 men. Clarion, Bethurum tells us in *Aboard a Flying Saucer* ("Non-Fiction: A True Story of Personal Experience," the title page adds) is a planet on the other side of our Moon and hence never visible to Earthlings.

Compared with the more dignified ladies of the other space ships, Aura sparkles, and her desert idyll with Truman has some unique touches. She seems to be the only "space woman" in these books ever to receive a gift from a terrestrial; somewhere on Clarion is an earthly fountain pen. Next to her "office" in the Scow is a room with a typewriter; on it she types, through the wall (by telepathic control?) a letter, in French, answering a question in the same language. The letter is reproduced in the book; it shows that Aura needs a new machine, and refresher courses in both typing and French—there are too many mistakes in both. She can when she wishes, we are told, use "perfect and high level English," or "hit the same ordinary plane" as Bethurum's. She breaks into doggerel rhyme every so often; many of these gems cry for quotation, but I have space for only one. She is the only space woman to mention books, even briefly: asked what her hobbies are, she says, "I like to read and ride and swim, and fish in lakes and rivers. I like to dress up nice and dance. But housework gives me shivers."

But she is no mere bluestocking. "Her smooth skin was a beautiful olive and roses, and her brown-eyed flashing smile seemed to make her complexion more glowing." Usually she wears a red and black dress and a red and black beret; but once she wears "...a light gray slack outfit, very chic indeed, with her fully developed small figure set off by the slacks, which appeared almost as if painted on her, so snugly did they fit."

Perhaps small wonder that Mrs. Truman Bethurum's successful divorce suit in Los Angeles in 1956 named Captain Rhanes as correspondent.

Clarion itself "sure sounds like Heaven," Bethurum says, and he accepts instantly an invitation to visit it, bringing five selected men friends. No women on this first visit, says Aura: "There is a reason for this, and I ask you to take my word for it." No cameras either, oddly enough. They discuss plans energetically. Aura comments on the first

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name on the guest list, Father John: "He is well known in your town, and in cape and gown perhaps he will lead us all in a mass or two, and join with orations and songs to enlighten my crew." But these daydreams come to an abrupt and mysterious end. After the meeting of Nov. 2, 1952, when plans for the stag visit to Clarion were almost complete, the Scow goes away normally, but never returns.

It will be of interest to note that Bethurum reports visiting Adamski at Palomar Gardens in July 1953; he told Adamski about Clarion, and Adamski expressed his belief in the story.

After Angelucci and Bethurum, *The White Sands Incident*, by Daniel W. Fry, seems bare and colorless. Mr. Fry, who was an instrument technician at White Sands when the incident was said to have occurred, never saw the occupant of the saucer, since A-Lan (or Alan) has four more years to go in the process of becoming acclimatized to Earth's air, gravity, and germs, so that he can live on Earth if he wishes; but he converses with Fry by the usual telepathy (here referred to as ESP) and by "direct modulation of the auditory nerve." Compared to the picturesque details so lavishly supplied by other extraterrestrials, A-Lan's conversation has few high spots. But this brevity is compensated for by the early date that Fry assigns to his experience—July 4, 1950, more than two years before any of our other contactees'—and by the whirligig speed of his reported trip in the saucer at A-Lan's invitation: 32 minutes from White Sands to New York and return.

Mr. Fry's shrewd economy of incident and detail of course diminishes the amount of "proof" that can reasonably be demanded by critics. But the last two authors on our list do even better. These books present no in-person contacts at all; messages from these groups of "space beings" come solely through various forms of mental telepathy. Van Tassel's title, *I Rode a Flying Saucer!*, is, as he himself points out, no more than a bid for attention. The rest of the title page reads: "The Mystery of the Flying Saucers Revealed through George W. Van Tassel: Radioned to you by Other-World Intelligences in Reaction to Man's Destructive Action." The book presents 52 "messages" received at Giant Rock Airport, California, between Jan. 6, 1952 and Mar. 20, 1953, before an audience, while Mr. Van Tassel was "...in attunement with the vibratory frequency of the communicating intelligence and...unaware of his audience."

None of the Van Tassel "Intelligences" are identified as being "women," and none are said to come from any particular planet. Their names

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and titles indicate a quasi-military organization: "Lutbunn, senior in command, first wave, planet patrol, realms of Schare"; "Latamarx, 62nd projection, 5th wave, planet patrol, realms of Schare"; "Singba, regional fleet authority for the entire 45th projection, all waves, realms of Schare"; etc. The organization travels in saucers that are called "ventlas" and cannot be shot down, and it enjoys the benefits of pinpoint navigation. On Mar. 21, 1952, Totalmon (4th projection, 7th wave, space patrol, realms of Schare) informs his listeners: "Elevation 750 miles above you, speed 170,000 miles per second." On May 23, 1952, Kletarc (42nd projection, 3rd wave, realms of Schare) says: "We are about to pass out of your cone of receptivity, 72,148.2 miles above you."

One of the last messages should be noted particularly (Feb. 13, 1953): "Hail in love and peace. I am Ashtar, commandant Vela quadra sector, station Schare. You have just heard the authority granted by Schonling, Lord God of the third dimensional sector, for our authority to take corrective measures. We are creating a Light energy vortice near the planet Shan (Earth) in an effort to stabilize your planet. This effort requires the combined forces of 86 projections, 9100 waves, of 236,000 ventlas. Needless to say this vortice is going to create extensive damage to counteract the unbalance man has created on Shan. Our center extends to you their love and blessings. My Light. I am Ashtar."

At Giant Rock, where these "messages" were radioned," Van Tassel holds an annual Spacecraft Convention. He also conducts there a "College of Universal Wisdom," and issues the "Proceedings" of that institution; he has also been receiving contributions toward the construction of a "longevity machine" according to instructions given him by the "other-world intelligences." Since issuing IRAFS he has had, he alleges, experiences of a more material nature, including "levitation" from the desert into a saucer one night in the summer of 1956.

The Saucers Speak! A Documentary Report of Interstellar Communication by Radio Telegraphy, by George H. Williamson and Alfred C. Bailey, contains messages said to have been received, chiefly at Prescott, Ariz., from Aug. 2, 1952, to Feb. 15, 1953. The small group of contactees included "Mr. R.," the radio operator, a somewhat enigmatic figure. Messages came also by automatic writing, by "the Board" (a variety of Ouija board), and by "direct telepathic contact"; once a Bugs Bunny movie was involved in communication procedure. In addition to the 24 messages

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presented, members of the group are said to have received many others telepathically.

On Nov. 20, 1952, Mr. and Mrs. Williamson and Mr. and Mrs. Bailey were four of the six "witnesses" who watched George Adamski through binoculars as he had his first "contact" with the Venusian; both couples had been acquainted with Adamski for some time. Williamson made a cast of the hieroglyphic footprints for his own study; the symbols are discussed at some length in *Other Tongues*, his second book. There are indeterminate rumors that since 1952 the Baileys have retracted their testimony to Adamski's "contact"; Williamson has gone to Peru, whence messages from his "Council of Seven Lights" reach his adherents in the U. S.

The "extraterrestrial cast" of TSS is smaller than Van Tassel's, but the names are just as picturesque and some members are very communicative. There is Nah-9, who informs his contactees, "Sometimes on Neptune we eat Macas, which are like your cattle but do not have horns and have very big ears." Both Zo of Neptune and Zrs of Uranus are specific about Fowser —Earth's second moon, a "dark moon," never seen "because of certain conditions." **Sedat, Universal Record Keeper,** stated that "all thoughts are recorded in the Temple of Records on the planet Hatonn in Andromeda. Kadar Lacu, although "a mere youth—several hundred years old," was head of the Interplanetary Council-Circle on Master-Craft. His constituency was apparently vast: "I am elected from the Universe." Also represented were the Toresoton and Safanian Solar Systems; Andromeda—26470; Wolf—359; and other parts of the solar system and the universe.

All these "space people" travel in saucers, and call them "Crystal Bells"; a group of the vehicles is called a "Bell Flight," and may include hundreds or thousands of Bells. As both Earthlings and "extraterrestrials" were preparing for an attempted landing and in-person contact scheduled for Sept. 28 (it failed—apparently because the correct road was hidden by a cloud of dust raised by logging trucks), Zo tells his "contacts" that "there are 14,000 bells near the second moon, Fowser."

The most interesting communications in TSS are those that refer briefly to the "Solex Mal"—the Mother Tongue or Solar Tongue, the universal language. "All men of other worlds speak this language," says Affa of Uranus; only on Earth has it been forgotten. It is a "symbolic pictographic" language; no symbols are shown, but translated syl-

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lables of Solex Mal were provided as a password before the unsuccessful contact attempt of Sept. 28.

Both Mr. Williamson and his wife hold degrees in anthropology; the remnants of this professional training appear clearly in his longer book, *Other Tongues—Other Flesh: A Startling Sequel to "The Saucers Speak!"*

This volume is an elaborate and complex attempt to synthesize all the stories emanating from the various contactees; to bring them all into harmony—that is, into harmony with Williamson's own doctrines; and to provide, we might say, a kind of "holy scripture" for the contact-communication believers.

The section "Other Tongues" gives further attention to the Solex Mal. The esoteric symbols on the celebrated footprints of Adamski's Venusian are assumed to be in the universal language. Williamson's "translation" of them is followed, however, by an entirely different translation by another interpreter.

A group of 81 "revealed" pictographs is presented, some followed only by the syllables of speech they are said to represent, some by syllables plus a translation. The forms range from simple to elaborate; no basic quality or "style" seems to prevail throughout the "vocabulary."

Clearly, the Mother Tongue of the universe is neither easy to read nor easy to write.

In the section "Other Flesh," the author describes his classification of extraterrestrials into six groups. Williamson apparently sees space beings everywhere; Earth swarms with them. He is able, however, to identify them as Migrants, Wanderers, Prophets, Harvesters, Agents, or Intruders. The Intruders have perhaps a special interest; they are the beings "from Orion," which Williamson asserts is an area of evil in the "Omniverse"; saucer contact claimants who behave suspiciously or appear fraudulent may be "Intruders," he suggests.

Strictly speaking, this is not a book about the *events* of contact cases but about their *results*. The author makes no attempt to give details about individual "messages", such as dates, circumstances, or participants (as he did in TSS), except such vague references as, "A research group in Iowa was told by radiotelegraphy that...," and similar statements. He mentions by name many of the contactees, and uses their reported experiences to illustrate or prove his theories. He answers, to his own satisfaction at least, most of the usual arguments against the contact cases at one point or another in the discussion.

In spite of the book's formal "plan," it gives an im-

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pression of confusion, of an enormous catch-all into which everything and anything has been hurriedly and helter-skelter thrown. Here are Old Testament prophets, Fortean icefalls, pyramidology, the "international bankers," the symbolism of gems, the Kabbala, the griffon, Einstein, the Ainu, vortexes, Moslem legends, the RMF (Resonating Electro-magnetic Field), Babylonian rituals, Greek myths, Yoga, the Toltecs, Job, the cockatrice, Swedenborg—these and hundreds of others, all proving something, singly or together. Williamson often discovers, in a sudden juxtaposition of seemingly random facts (or assertions), profound meaning, or secret proof of his doctrines.

What is unquestionably revealed to the reader, with painful clarity, are the intense, the tragic *fears* that haunt the apostles and disciples of the contact-communication stories. Many passages are an almost rhythmic see-saw between terrors—of war, of soil sterility, of strange weather, of the atom—and feverish reassurances that the space beings will somehow give protection from these dooms.

Although these books and stories show so much difference in their incidents, characters, and atmosphere, they have a strong family likeness besides. In these and in other c-c cases certain underlying themes occur repeatedly; the pattern—most of it set by Adamski, we notice—includes the following major typical features (not every feature in every case, of course):

1. The human beings involved are relatively obscure individuals (before the contacts). They usually, though not always, have a background of interest in the occult or in flying saucers, or both.

2. In-person contacts involve a single human being. These are usually private, usually at night, in an isolated spot, without witnesses. Visits to the interior of the "spacecraft," and eventually a trip in it, usually are reported. Telepathic communications will involve a small group of contactees.

3. No serious communication difficulties are encountered. Gestures, facial expressions, and sign language are not misinterpreted. The vocal language used is English, or seems to be. Mental telepathy is widely used, even for the in-person contacts. It functions as an aid to understanding gestures or words, and often it "alerts" the contactee for an approaching contact.

4. In appearance and physique, all the "spacemen" resemble man—that is, they resembled Western Caucasian man, human beings of European-American descent, as of the middle of the twentieth century. Even Zo, a telepathic

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contact and never seen, describes himself as "5 ft. 8 in. tall, with auburn hair, weight 148 pounds"; he is "what you would call 25 years old," is married and has 7 children. Except from the "ventlas," both men and women are reported; there are no reports of more than two sexes.

5. Their resemblance to us, in looks, demeanor, and customs, is so great that they constantly live and work among human beings, indistinguishable from them, and have done so for many ages. Contactees are sometimes permitted to use a "key" to make themselves known to the disguised space beings—a sign, gesture, or secret word of identification—but sometimes recognition is refused.

6. These resemblances notwithstanding, the "space people" are in every way superior to us. They have our kind of beauty, but it is much greater than ours. In good health, in length of life, in emotional adjustment, they have achieved all the goals we are still striving for. Their intellectual powers, their science and technology, make us look like cave-dwellers. Along the road to perfect spirituality they have far outstripped us. The differences, however, are wholly differences of *degree*, not of *kind*.

8. They come from all over the universe; even when their home worlds are specific astronomical bodies, they have travelled widely and are familiar with conditions throughout Space.

8. As a result of their greater spiritual development, fabulous powers are claimed for them and by them (they have no false modesty). These powers are subject, however, to many abrupt and strange limitations. Repeatedly, they "cannot reveal," "may not reveal," or "are not permitted to reveal at this time," complete details about some crucial topic, or explanations, proofs, reasons, etc. Excuses may or not be provided for the mysterious veil: when Angelucci asks his space friends to restore him to health, they tell him sadly that only his illness makes him sensitive enough for them to contact him at all; when Bethurum asks Captain Rhanes for the names of her crew, she replies, "Surely, they all have names, but for obvious reasons I cannot give them out." See also Desmond Leslie's exclusion from one of Adamski's "contacts," already referred to.

9. All the home worlds of these extraterrestrials are Utopian. There is no war, poverty, disease, corruption, injustice or any other of man's woes. All problems have been solved. Unfortunately, whatever wealth of far-flung experience produced these Elysian conditions, the spacemen discuss only the *principles* by

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which the problems were solved (e. g., "living by universal law"), and the results, never the blueprints. Apart from absence of basic troubles, material pleasures are innumerable, and would not be out of place in the best homes of Hollywood. To judge from the spacemen's own descriptions, from the interior of the saucers as reported by contactees, and from the brief glimpses of nearby worlds vouchsafed to fortunate human travellers, extraterrestrials everywhere enjoy all the amenities of civilization—with one striking exception, to be discussed later. They have music, painting, sculpture, games, sports, dancing, every labor-saving device, exquisite meals, beverages in crystal goblets, elegantly appointed homes, becoming garments.

10. To beings from worlds of such physical and spiritual perfection, Earth naturally reveals itself as doubly miserable and wicked. Most of the contactees report, in fact, that all or most of the evil in the universe is now encapsulated on this planet, whose past is even darker than history tells us.

11. The spacemen's purposes in visiting such a grim world are lofty and benevolent. All wish only to help us; to save us from the better-publicized terrors of our time, notably the H-bomb. Sometimes the bomb endangers them too, (by threatening to disarrange the Solar System, poison the atmosphere of all the other planets and the space between them, etc.) and their benevolence is mixed with warnings. But since they always claim the ability to protect themselves from us if driven to it, these selfish motives for their visits must be considered secondary. They wish to select human beings through whom they can influence humanity—the contactees, that is—and these persons are often specifically told to publicize their experiences and the resulting messages for mankind. One or two minor purposes have also been mentioned, such as education, tourism, replenishing atmosphere tanks, etc.

12. The reasons given by the spacemen for their choice of human friends vary somewhat. Aura Rhanes states that the meeting with Bethurum was mere chance. The modulation of the auditory nerve by which A-Lan talked to Fry is not possible, A-Lan says, in all human beings; Fry is one of the fortunate few. Angelucci owed his selection to his poor physical condition. In most cases some spiritual component of the contactee's personality also draws the attention of the extraterrestrials and fits him to be their ambassador.

13. The content of the communications from space is of two kinds. The first and, as

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both sides make clear, the more important, is inspirational in nature: moral, ethical, religious, mystical, etc., "messages." The ideas are such as occur in church doctrines and precepts, mystical writings, and particularly in the teachings of esoteric cults of all kinds. It is this part of the communications that gives to the whole contact-communication picture its predominantly religious tone, since the "messages" are paramount.

14. The second ingredient of the space communications is factual: information on a wide range of topics such as the history of man and of the Earth; description of all other planets in the Solar System, of the Sun, and of interplanetary space; outer space and other solar systems; the construction and operation of spaceships; the geography, climate, clothing, religious attitudes, etc., of the home worlds of the spacemen, and so on. The subjects mentioned are numerous, but the total amount of information is small; it would not, for example, fill even one copy of the World Almanac. Scientific and technological statements are limited to a few sentences; full exposition would be incomprehensible at present, the spacemen assert.

15. The human beings who receive contacts always consider them a pleasure and a privilege. They desire more of them; in-person contactees often return to the place where earlier ones occurred. They express a wish to have others join the meetings—although this seldom turns out to be possible, whether because of earthly skepticism or extraterrestrial rebuff. They do, however, share their experiences with others through meetings, lectures, and books. Typically, they first attract ridicule and family and business troubles, then disciples. In any event, after the contact they cease to be obscure.

The first thing wrong with these stories is their picture of the Uniform Universe.

In the infinite worlds of space, habitable planets should be of many kinds, differing in hundreds of ways that would profoundly affect the appearance of any intelligent life that might develop on them. Even in our own Solar System the planets are of different sizes, at different distances from the sun, receiving different amounts of solar radiation, having different gravities and, apparently, different atmospheres. Beyond our system, revolving around strange suns whose characteristics may be widely different from Sol's, are planets with conditions for life we can hardly guess at.

But our alleged "spacemen" visitors, whether they come from smaller Mars, giant Saturn, or "Hatonn in Andromeda," all resemble us and all

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resemble each other. The likeness is not of looks only: it extends to their whole behavior pattern. According to these stories, long eons of environmental differences have had absolutely no effect on the forms of life in space.

This has not happened on Earth. Earth is a kaleidescope of varying life forms and life patterns. It has bred the gorilla and the virus, the dragonfly and the shark. In one single species, our own, it can show Eskimos and Berbers, Indians of the Andes, Nigerian pygmies, and Masai warriors, and scores of human beings in other shapes, sizes, and colors. All this diversification has taken place on one very small planet with more or less uniform conditions throughout, and with relatively little change in the environment (compared to differences elsewhere in the universe) since the first protoplasmic cell divided.

We have the spectacle, therefore, of Earth dominated by diversity, while outside of Earth the rule is uniformity. Why should we be this little island of inexhaustible variety and endless change? Why is Space so monotonous? For if it is otherwise, we get no hint of it from the "spacemen"; on the contrary, they take pains to emphasize the similarity of their worlds to our own.

We are told that all the spacemen look like us because we and they together belonged to the same human stock, which spread all over the universe. Again, why is Earth different? The same species of bird living in two different environments will very soon begin to reflect the differences; but these spacemen, subjected for millions of years to varying influences, still look just as they did originally.

"But isn't it egotistical of man to think that he is unique? Isn't it arrogant to claim that we can't exist anywhere except on this one planet?" This is a favorite argument of the believers—but the egotism is all on their side, not among the skeptics. What the believers are saying is that intelligent life must be clothed in forms and thoughts *like our own:* that it cannot conceivably appear in *un*human forms. If they are capable of distrusting anything, the believers distrust the reports of "little men" who come out of flying saucers.

As it happens, these little men reports are extraordinarily interesting as a contrast to the contact-communication stories; for the two types of reports are different in every way. The little men's appearance is humanoid, not superhuman; their behavior is quite incomprehensible; and they never *communicate* at all. They utter no lofty messages, no explanations of an-

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cient riddles, no admonitions, warnings, reassurances, prophecies, or esoteric doctrine. Even when they are said to "speak," what they say is as unintelligible as what they do—nonsense syllables, sometimes interpreted by the observer as words of his own language.

The attitude and behavior of the witnesses is likewise completely different in the two types of reports. These enigmatic encounters are always unexpected by the human being or beings involved; they are never "alerted" by mental telepathy or any other cryptic means to the fact that they are going to "have a contact." The witnesses are always terrified, during and after the experience; they only wish it had never happened at all, and the last thing they want is any repetition of it.

Where the communication contactees are obscure before the event and increasingly well known afterwards, those who see "little men" are only too glad to go back, once the nine days' wonder and scoffing is over, into the same obscurity they enjoyed before their distasteful experience. They write no books, give no lectures, attract no defenders or disciples, found no cults. In both types of meeting the public is highly skeptical; but those who encounter "little men" retreat into silence or resentment, or both, in the face of ridicule; while the communication contactees are so noble, so talkative, and so persistent, that eventually they grow a private public all their own, in whose breathless b e l i e f (not untinged with envy and hope) they can bask and ignore the scoffing of the unbelievers.

But for an artist who wants to paint "Man Meeting Extraterrestrial," one of the grotesque little men, making "gestures not at all human," seems much more likely to be a correct representative of The Unknown than an idealized human being from the contact stories—a superman, but still super*man*.

Since these resemblances, however improbable, are indispensable to the contact reports, they must be saved. But even the contactees realize that they have to explain somehow these biological coincidences. They do. They produce one of their dogmatic revisions of science: Environmental differences do not exist. All planets have the same atmosphere, or nearly so. "Earth man could go anywhere in the Universe without discomfort." Mercury is not hot. Pluto is not cold. The Sun is not hot either. The Moon is perfectly habitable, and inhabited.

Our alleged space visitors are almost unanimous about this "fact." Only Fry's A-Lan, as we have seen, has not yet caught up with the information.

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This method of argument (if it deserves the name), which consists of supporting one unproved assertion by another one equally unproved, turns up often in c-c doctrine. For another example, if the skeptic points out that the spacemen's religious ideas do not seem extraterrestrial at all, since they have long been known on earth, he gets the answer: "Of course these ideas are familiar—don't you realize that the spacemen have been here for thousands of years? *All* the great moral and religious leaders of the past have really been spacemen in disguise."

The contact-communication books are full of references to "science" and "technology—earthly, unearthly and mixed. The earthly kind comes in bits and chunks and scraps, occasionally in lengthy expositions that give an effect, at least, of knowledge. The information may or may not be correct; it is certainly doubtful, for example, that the explosion of H-bombs could tilt the earth's axis and more doubtful that it could disturb the orbits of distant planets and poison their atmosphere. Spill pepper in New York and Chicago sneezes? The distances, forces, and volumes involved are too enormous. Cataclysmic earthquakes, more powerful than a thousand H-bombs, have many times shaken earth but left her on the same old axis trundling along the same old orbit.

We would not be surprised at scientific mistakes coming from the *authors* of these books, because their competence in the subject is limited. One seems to have little background and little interest (Bethurum); one appears to have taken in more information than he can digest (Williamson); and the others are self-educated in science, a process that often leaves strange gaps in a student's data, fails to build up a coherent over-all picture, and gives him an impression of his knowledge that is not justified by his real stock of facts.

But it is not the authors who make these blunders; it is the spacemen, supposedly so well informed about Earth, who are quoted by the authors. It is rather surprising to find, for example, that the Venusian "master" is obviously confused as to the exact difference between an element and a mineral, and we wish we knew what he means by the curious expression, "physical mineral vanities." (He also thinks that the legendary "Golden Age," common in Earth mythologies, means an age "when men worshipped gold more than God.") And what can Zuhl and Ramu of Saturn mean when they talk about "a tem-

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perate and cooler section or zone on the Moon"? Unless they have "corrected" the Moon's motion as well as its atmosphere, all parts of the Moon must regularly experience the same heat and cold in turn; a permanent temperate zone is impossible.

Mr. Adamski himself, famed as an amateur astronomer, no doubt understands this fact; but perhaps he was too polite to correct his friends. Nevertheless it does seem, from these and numerous other examples, that these omniscient critics ought to make sure of their Earthly science before they start revising it.

The revisions may be wholesale or retail. Sometimes one sentence obliterates all human observations, data, calculations, deductions, theories, and inventions; whatever has been making steam engines and sewing machines function all these years, it was a mistake. The process of re-educating us along the correct lines constitutes a problem, however, since the spacemen can only *assert* our wrongness, not explain it or give more than a few hints about the substitute. When the savants from space do try to explain, they do not have much luck; even with the help they presumably gave him, Williamson makes heavy weather of describing the "Resonating Electro-magnetic Field." Most spacemen do not even attempt an explanation; with a kindly smile they repeat that their science would be quite incomprehensible to us anyway.

The trouble with this particular excuse is that we manage to do better than this on Earth. A brilliant teacher here can take a class step by step through an explanation, making a difficult subject lucid to most pupils and interesting to even the stupid ones. Desert Bedouins who never saw a spark-plug before the age of 20 learn to be competent truck drivers and mechanics. Yet among all these "supermen," on all their worlds, with all their wealth of experience, there is not one textbook, not one science teacher, not one pedagogical method, that can be used on Earth.

It is impossible to do justice even to those fragments of space "science" and "technology" that these books contain short of many unavailable pages. Reluctantly, I choose two from Clarion, reported to Bethurum by Captain Rhanes in her off-hand way. There are three kinds of power, she informs him—"anti-magnetic or gravitational, plutonic, and nutronic"; Clarion uses the third kind, nutronic, as in the "nutronic jeeps." We can only guess at the meaning of this double-talk; but I suspect that it would not have

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made much more sense even if Bethurum had talked to the men of the Scow's crew who — presumably — had charge of the power plant.

But a nutronic jeep is nothing at all compared to Clarion's "retroscope." This amazing machine enables Clarionites to review in their homes *"any event that ever happened anywhere"* (italics mine). You may have thought that time-travel was confined to science fiction; but here it turns out to have been invented and mass-produced—"from time untold"—right on the other side of our Moon. Truman, unfortunately, shows only the mildest interest in this gadget. He asks none of the questions he should—how does it work, what does it look like, how is it used for education, for research, for entertainment, for "touring"?

Just in passing, the "retroscope" seems to be exclusive with Clarion. None of the other "space people" seem to know about it; they never mention it.

A scientist with time on his hands might find it amusing to try to analyze the impenetrable muddle that passes for "science" in these contact-communication books. Only one thing is clear: everything that is quoted, misquoted, or omitted about Earthly science and technology, and every statement that the spacemen make—or excuse themselves from making—about their own, appears to fit far better the theory that these statements originate in the minds of imperfectly informed human beings, who are frequently out of their depths in such matters, than with the theory that these statements come from supremely skilled, competent, and experienced extraterrestrials.

Again and again these "spacemen" behave like inventions. There is always a discrepancy between their claims to great powers and what they are able to *do*.

They claim to have built spaceships, telepathic machines, and other technical wonders; but when they want to take pictures for Adamski they have to use the Polaroid he had brought along—so unluckily, however, without enough film—because their own cameras and film "are entirely magnetic and you have no equipment on Earth that could reproduce such pictures." Something is very odd here: we remember that in Adamski's *first* book the two methods could be used together: Orthon took one of Adamski's first plates aboard his ship, erased the image, and replaced it with some of the famous hieroglyphics. The result was certainly "reproducible," since it appeared in his first book.

There are frequent claims

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that disease has been mastered; but Angelucci's good friends Orion and Lyra are unable to restore him to health without destroying his sensitivity to their messages. They cannot help him fix his automobile, either, when he and his family are stranded shivering on the desert at night. It seems a trivial matter; Angelucci does not entertain the thought for a moment, for he knew by then that "the space visitors never in any way interfere in mundane affairs."

They proclaim this policy of non-interference often, in fact, and it is one of the favorite excuses made for them by their human friends. But they *do* interfere; the contacts themselves are "interference"; instructing them to "spread the gospel" is certainly "interference in mundane affairs".

At the same time, the spacemen claim, of course, that they *have* helped definitely—discreetly and behind the scenes—in man's recent spectacular conquest of disease. They claim to have solved all those disagreeable problems—*at home*: poverty, sickness, war, economic inequality. They agree that most of the worlds in the universe—some say all other worlds except Earth—have solved them. But all this far-flung, age-old, ripened, tested, successful experience in problem-solving cannot suggest to them a single really effective method of attacking the many problems of Earth.

They claim the most urgent purposes, gravely important to us and themselves; but again there is a vast discrepancy between those purposes and the methods they use to attain them. If their intelligence were equal to their zeal, for example, they would certainly realize by now that some people can exercise more effective influence in the world than others. Here is the significance of the obscurity of the contactees—and it has *nothing* to do with democracy or snobbery. It is entirely a practical matter; why choose missionaries who—through no fault of their own—are bound to exert only a feeble influence?

They claim to have both mental telepathy and, in some cases, telepathic instruments—the famous "thought disks"—both of which would surely be helpful in identifying suitable human beings. But they do not put these to work in any determined manner for this purpose.

They claim to have been visiting Earth, and on Earth, for centuries, studying us and (presumably) trying to help. But they have no grasp of the complexity of human problems. Their chief worry is "the bomb"; but the bomb is only a by-product of war, and war is a by-product of a hun-

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dred other bitterly entangled problems.

Sometimes the believers assert that the spacemen *have* contacted some of our more prominent citizens, and been rebuffed. More often they say, "Why should they contact generals and scientists who only wish to use the saucers as weapons?"

This amounts to saying that there is no one available on Earth who is *both* prominent and "good"—which is simply not true. The head of the largest church in Christendom is not a warmonger; Gandhi was not; Helen Keller and Albert Schweitzer are not. Even if we disregard community standing, and consider only the *number* of possible contactees, it is absurd to suppose that the present dozen or so represent the sum total of uprightness in today's Sodom.

For any *concrete* demonstration of their fabulous powers, we customarily have to depend on the word of the one contactee who reports it —as, for example, the disappearance of Bethurum's flashlight when Aura makes it "gone" from his hand.

Not that the contactees or the space people or the believers mind. They all have the same proverb: *Every statement is its own proof.*

If these space people do exist, and if their behavior is as described, then they are not high minded, noble, powerful beings. They are humbugs!

For all their massive intellects, the space people cannot make up their minds about the one important point: proof.

As everyone knows, all of the "evidence" offered so far has been unsatisfactory (except to contactees and believers). The few photographs are suspect. Witnesses are non-existent, or their standing is ambiguous. The extraterrestrial "substances" that contactees claim to have in their possession are not available for laboratory or public examination. The reported damage to terrestrial objects due to proximity to a saucer cannot be verified. The famous footprints and camera plate associated with Adamski's first "contact" are almost impossible to discuss at this date; they can be judged only in the framework of the rest of the story.

Two other things must be ruled out as proof, though they are often put forward as such by believers. The seeming "sincerity" of the contactees is not proof; it represents merely a subjective judgment on the part of the listener, who may or may not be qualified to judge. When I say that a man is "sincere," all it means is that he has convinced *me* that he himself believes what he says. He may indeed believe it, yet may be, from any one of a thousand causes, completely mistaken. Or he may not believe it himself in the least, for all his

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earnest manner; if it were otherwise, so many spinsters' savings would not go to line the pockets of confidence men.

All this seems elementary; but the frequency with which the "sincerity" argument is raised makes it necessary to emphasize the distinction. We can say that a man's story holds together, that it makes sense internally, that it does not contradict itself, that it is reasonable in terms of the surrounding circumstances; but we cannot say that his sincerity is conclusive evidence that his story is true.

The highly inspirational quality of the spacemen's messages is not proof either. We are not asking whether these messages are beautiful; we are asking whether they are "unearthly." We can discover no such quality. On thousands of bookshelves, in hundreds of thousands of books written by human beings, we can find the same basic precepts, the same religious, ethical, moral, philosophical, and mystical ideas—often expressed much more strongly and beautifully than they are by the spacemen. Occult and cultist literature is full of these ideas. The inspirational tone of the messages does not prove in the least that their source must be extraterrestrial—unless you make another unproved statement, that similar messages of known terrestrial origin have been around a long time because the spacemen have.

On this point the believers think illogically. They confuse rejection of the contact *reports* with rejection of the *messages*. The skeptic disbelieves in Ashtar's existence; Ashtar is opposed to war; therefore the skeptic is in favor of it. Contrariwise, if I affirm my belief in certain "eternal truths," I am obligated to believe in the "spacemen" who currently expound those truths. The two beliefs have nothing to do with each other.

As for unequivocal proof, the spacemen never provide it. It would seem necessary and desirable for them to do so—whether out of consideration for their human friends, who would be spared much ridicule if proper evidence were available, or in consideration of the urgency of their own message. It would be easy to provide, as discussed below.

The real question is, do they or don't they want to be recognized? Do they or don't they want to be acknowledged? Do they, or don't they, want to establish their own existence—which means providing proof. They blow hot and cold. One moment they are commanding a contactee to tell everyone about his experience, regardless of ridicule. This sounds like a desire for recognition. The next minute they are insist-

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ing that they don't care, that recognition is not important, that they never "interfere"; or they are referring darkly to "certain reasons" why they must continue to wrap themselves in a fog of uncertainty.

It is all inconsistent, for there is no difficulty about providing proof. They do not need to land in Times Square, if they are afraid of crowds. All they need to do is to give one or more contactees either 1) an object of terrestrial origin that clearly shows the influence of extraterrestrial forces; or 2) an artifact that obviously could not have originated on earth at all.

In the first category are photographs, of course; *enough* photographs would eventually silence the loudest skeptic. But the space people are positively neurotic about having their pictures taken; and while they fight so shy of the camera, we may as well forget this kind of proof.

Even a modest collection of spaceship objects would be overwhelming evidence, but they are not forthcoming. According to a conversation Bethurum once had with a sceptic, the famous "letter in French" typed by Aura on paper from Clarion, which Bethurum presumably still has, would be no help at all even if were subjected to chemical analysis, because "paper on Clarion is made out of just the same kind of trees we have on Earth."

It is a waste of time to continue to mention the endless excuses by which the spacemen, always with the loyal support of their contactees. manage to get out of providing proof. But one kind of *missing* evidence is so startling, once its absence is noted, that it must be mentioned.

The easiest extraterrestrial artifact of all to provide would be an extraterrestrial *book*.

Not the clumsy pictographs of the "Solex Mal," but a real book of history, poetry, fiction, a treatise or a textbook. Such a volume would be impossible to fake; it would command belief.

But as it happens, books are practically never mentioned at all in these contact-communication stories.

The spaceships have "TV," music, dancing, games, paintings; they carry table fittings for banquets. But the spacious lounges apparently contain no bookshelves and no book. No one is ever seen reading, no one ever mentions reading (except Aura, who claims that it is one of her hobbies), no one ever mentions libraries or literature of any kind.

Curiouser and curiouser. Adamski's space friends are completely uninterested in the books he has written about them. They never ask about them, and he never mentions the subject. His

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first book is actually published—*in* two countries—while he is making repeated visits to the space ships. But he never offers an autographed copy to any of them. They never ask to see it. They never comment on its reception, though it aroused fierce controversy. He never so much as takes a copy of the book on one of his "contacts," to show to the people who are the chief characters in it. No author I ever heard of behaved this way at the birth of a book.

In the last chapter of ISS, Adamski describes an unexpected visit, on which occasion he and Zirkon stand at the portholes of the mother ship to have their pictures taken by Orthon, from the scout ship. His second book was actually being printed— "the presses are rolling on its pages," he says; but he recorded the episode instantly "to rush it to my publishers for inclusion," and the Orthon snapshots as well, obviously, whatever their defects.

In the intervening 8 months he had written his second book and sent it to his publisher. But even on that final occasion, presented with this unique last-minute contribution for his book, Adamski never mentions its publication, never mentions to *them* the dash to his publishers, the stop-press order, the changed printer's schedule, that will gladly be endured for the sake of including their gracious last-minute favor to him.

No great civilization ever flourished for an extended period of time without producing a written literature. These extraterrestrial civilizations have existed, we are told, far longer than any on earth. Where, then, are their books?

I can suggest an answer (I am getting pretty good at this sort of excuse myself by now): "They don't need books. They remember everything without them. They know by heart the literature of all civilizations. Reading and writing are nothing but crutches for primitive minds."

I don't believe it. I want to see those books. Their absence if one more proof of the unlikelihood that these stories are true at all.

But whether the spacemen are illiterate or not, they ought to realize that proof is needed, desirable, and absurdly easy to furnish. They have yet to give a good reason for not providing it; and we can only conclude that they don't *want* to be believed in after all, no matter what they say.

If a defender says, at this point, that the UFOs themselves have been playing this same tantalizing and contradictory game for years, refusing to get themselves conclusively accepted, yet sceptics have not denied *their* existence, he is confused again. For the UFOs are

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unidentified flying objects. We have no reliable clue whatever to *their* purposes. We have no reason to expect to understand *them.*

But the space beings have plainly, specifically, and repeatedly stated their objectives. We know what they want, because they have told us. *Their* failure to use effective methods cannot be explained.

To what extent do the contactees support and believe each other's stories? In public, everybody endorses everybody else—they can hardly do otherwise. Belief is another matter. I do not undertake to say how much belief is exchanged among them; only that there are hints in these books of a certain caution, a certain uncertainty that all the other stories are absolutely 100 percent.

More important—to what extent do the "spacemen" support each other?

They rather spectacularly fail to do so.

Where was Clarion, for example, during the night of August 23-24, 1954?

On that night, Adamski claims, he was shown both sides of the Moon by Ramu of Saturn, through an instrument on the Venusian carrier ship. (He had already seen the familiar side once before, on April 21-22, 1953, from the Saturnian ship.) As the ship goes around from the familiar toward the unfamiliar side, ahead of it in the sky should have been Captain Aura Rhanes' Clarion. But neither Ramu nor Adamski mention it. Adamski certainly knew about Clarion—for Bethurum had visited Palomar Gardens during the summer of 1953, and Adamski had then accepted Bethurum's story. But with a whole planet missing from where it should be, Adamski is neither surpised nor curious. Ramu even asks him, as they begin to retreat from the Moon, "Have you any questions before we return to the lounge?" "I could think of none," Adamski writes, "and shook my head."

And what about Fowser?

Williamson handles Fowser, the "dark moon" of Earth, which is never seen by us because of "certain conditions" (unspecified), and Williamson met Adamski in the summer of 1952 and was present at Adamski's first "contact." Fowser is a busy place; before the attempted contact by Zo, Um, Elex, Noro, Zago, etc., with Williamson's group, on Sept. 28, 1952, the "landing ship" was readied on Fowser and there were 14,000 bells near it. Fowser is prominent in Williamson's book, ***Other Tongues,*** published in 1957.

Then on Sept. 8, 1954, Adamski, eating sandwiches and coffee with Firkon and Ramu in a Los Angeles restaurant, hears from Ramu a long history of Earth. Among Ramu's statements are the

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following: "Another condition that we had watched with interest in observing the formation and development of the Earth planet was the forming of *only one moon* as its companion. (Italics mine.) Under the natural law of conditions, this would result in an unbalanced state unless at some future time another moon was formed to complement the small companion of a growing world."

Apparently Ramu had never heard of any second moon.

Adamski, with knowledge of two additional astronomical bodies accompanying the Earth and its Moon, never asks his good space friends, who are so generous with all kinds of other information, to confirm Clarion or Fowser. He never mentions Admirals' Scows or Crystal Bells.

He never mentions "ventlas," either, though ventlas are a prevalent type of space vehicle, patronized by Van Tassel's "other-world intelligences." On Feb. 13, 1953, Ashtar, "commandant Vela quadra sector, station Share," tells the V.T. group that "86 projections, 9100 waves, of 236,000 ventlas" are combining forces to create a "Light energy vortice" near the Earth that will "create extensive damage."

Five nights later, with this armada still presumably patrolling space near Earth, Adamski is having a long calm conversation with Orthon, Firkon, Kalna and Illmuth, and the Venusian "master"—none of whom breathe a syllable about the disciplinary ventlas.

Then there is the problem of Solex Mal. Naturally all the contactees sooner or later ask their friends from space about the language situation; why is communication so fluent? No spaceman actually says there is no such language as Solex Mal; but no one except Williamson's spacemen refers to it at all. Can it be that on Mercury, Mars, and Pluto they have no idea that they are supposed to use the "universal tongue"?

I could quote other examples of inexplicable omissions; but there are also cases of something worse—actual flat contradictions between one statement from space and another.

All planets have approximately the same atmosphere, say all of the spacemen except Fry's A-Lan; he has to practice for four more years before he can expose himself fully to the air of Earth.

All solar systems have 12 planets, say Adamski's friends; but Zo claims that there is a Solar System Twenty-Two, thus named because it has 22 planets (the 15th, we learn further, was once named Wogog but is now Elala—a pleasing revision).

Extraterrestrial records about Earth go back 78 million years, says one spaceman; 75,000 years, say another.

The craters on the Moon

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were formed by meteorites and by erosion; the craters on the moon were *not* caused by meteors or volcanic action, but came about by "vortical motion."

Statements about Earth's past, too long to quote, give completely different pictures.

If these "spacemen" set any boundaries to their own information, then omissions and contradictions like the above, and many others, might be glossed over as ignorance; but they do not. With the exception of A-Lan, they all claim to be experts who have travelled throughout space, and these statements are made as generalizations. They don't make mistakes, they don't tell lies, and their words are accurately reported.

That being the case, we wonder how they can be so oblivious of each other's existence, opinions, and facts.

And before I, as a skeptic, can consider the stories authentic, I want to know why one group seems to know so little—if anything—about the others. I want to know why the "universal language" is apparently not universal at all. I want to know where Clarion and Fowser were that night when Adamski was out in space and on the other side of the Moon.

Thanks to the Red Queen, Charles Fort, and modern technology, we have formed the habit of saying without thinking, "Anything is possible." But there seem to be some occasions when this is not true: namely, when two facts, mutually exclusive by definition, would have to coexist. It is impossible for it to be day and night at the same time in the same place; it is impossible for the same man to be simultaneously 5 feet tall and 6 feet tall, or to stand on his head and his feet at the same time. And it is impossible for Clarion to be there and not there, as Adamski's friends look toward it, at the same time.

To sum up: everything about these books is inconsistent with the theory that they are true, and fatally consistent with the theory that they are inventions. There is not a line that stamps the stories as "unearthly." The alleged spacemen are not noble intelligences but b o a s t f u l braggarts, gifted chiefly at making excuses. The authors make egregious b l u n d e r s; they contradict themselves, and the spacemen contradict each other. The proof offered is inadequate to support such astonishing claims; s i m p l e proofs that would be unshakable are never offered.

The G e r m a n s have a saying about a badly-written book: *"Es lasst sich nicht lesen"*—it will not allow itself to be read. So it is with these contact-communication stories—they do not allow themselves to be relieved. Nevertheless they *are* believed, apparently with no

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real concern over any incongruities, and with indefinitely elastic open-mindedness. The disciples seem able to swallow ever-flimsier explanation for ever-wilder stories; with no perceptible twinges of protest they have progressed from believing in Mr. Adamski's Venusians (who by now sound positively sensible compared to their successors) to believing in "samples of hair clipped from a 385-pound Venusian dog" (the ranking absurdity as this is written, though by the time it is published the dog may be eclipsed by a Jupiterian whale).

Why do books that "fall apart in the hand" as they are read, or crumble into arrant nonsense under any kind of examination, find publishers and a market? I suspect that many believers have not really *read* the books at all, in any critical sense of the word, but have formed their judgments from the impressive or "sincere" platform manner of contactee lecturers; the books are bought but never closely examined. Or they may have read the books and even considered the objections; but the emotional value of the stories to them is great enough to override any protests of logic, particularly when high-sounding generalities like tolerance, the search for the Truth, and so on, can be rung into the argument.

So far as the contactees are concerned, what do these stories represent—embellishments, fraud, imagination, daydreams, hallucination, suggestibility, imitation, fantasy, or delusion? No one knows what the mixture is for each case—by now, not even the contactees.

From a few cases comes the unmistakable and undiluted reek of the money motive, but by no means from all. There are other rewards for the role of Contact Man. There is the thrilling knowledge that he has the answer to a riddle that baffles everyone else: as Orfeo Angelucci put it, "I knew that I could have revealed many things about the saucer situation that were believed to be well hidden—and thus have stolen the thunder from many." If the secret sooner or later burns a hole in the tongue, the resulting limelight is not unbearable.

There may be the desire to reinforce one's own "message" by giving it the greater authority of extraterrestrialism —to make eternal truths seem still truer because they are spoken by Venusians or Saturnians.

There is the extreme distinction of having been one of the rare few singled out by these gracious supermen for their friendship and their revelations. There is the excitement of thinking that around the next corner may come a spacemen, deeply disguised to others as a "factory worker," perhaps, but

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known to you, by a secret Sign, as a *Neptunian!*

Even the disciples, who simply follow, believe, and repeat, can share the anticipation. "I too may have a contact. I too may recognize the factory worker. I too may fly to Venus! It has all happened to people no more remarkable than I am; it could happen to me, too."

Besides—we are so impatient! And the UFOs have never been tractable or helpful about explaining themselves. The answer could not be bought (do you remember the newspaper rewards offered in the early days for "the first live saucer"?). It could not be found by personal determination: "I'm going to roll up my sleeves and get to the bottom of this or know the reason why!" (the stalwarts found neither bottom not reason). It could not be found by the government (according to the government).

We human beings, we *Bandar-log*, don't take bafflement gracefully. We don't like permanent mysteries. Most people walked off and ignored the uncrackable cocoanut; others—too many others—had that uncontrollable urge to *produce* the answer. If nothing was known, something had to be invented. I think that, in part, "space intelligences" were an inevitable reaction to the impatience caused by the UFOs themselves.

Best of all, for contactees and followers alike these stories have *"normalized"* the whole idea of extraterrestrials, which some ten years ago began to loom as an actual ominous probability. Now it turns out that these intelligent, powerful, sinister strangers get hungry just like us, crack jokes, hate soap operas, and say "Merry Christmas." As for their unearthly powers, why, these are no menace; they are to be used only helpfully, to protect man from the consequences of his own mistakes.

Orfeo Angelucci's book may well be the most illuminating on our list in this respect. I wonder whether this author has any idea how much he has told us about himself, or how plainly. Vanity frustrated is clear on every page of the foreword describing his early life; vanity gratified reverberates from every detail of his association with Orion, Lyra, and his "other self" Neptune. These "superbly magnificent beings" chose him for their first contact with the people of earth, "baptized" him in the "pearly igloo" of their saucer "in the true light of worlds eternal," called him "beloved friend" and "citizen of the cosmos," and, finally, charged him: "You are our emissary for the present, Orfeo, and you must act!" Such consolations, secret but glorious, were well worth the ridicule drawn by his story at first,

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and well worth the dismay and embarrassment he caused his family rather than "break faith" with the space beings.

Fear as well as egotism is written large on these pages also. It is remarkable how many times Angelucci speaks of *"soft* music," *"soft* light," *"softly* glowing *light";* how many times Orion or Lyra "spoke softly," "said gently," "smiled warmly." Anyone who wants to see the non-financial motives for contact communication at work cannot do better than to study *The Secret of the Saucers.*

You, the believers, will continue to accept these stories, which do not offend your intelligence and which you need. But do not call us, the sceptics, narrow-minded because we are less easily satisfied. Do not say that we have no reasons except blind prejudice to doubt these stories. Do not require us to become the prisoners of your credulity.

Contact-Communication Books

1) **Flying Saucers Have Landed**, by Desmond Leslie and George Adamski. London, Werner Laurie, Sept. 1953; New York, British Book Center, Oct. 1953. 232 pp.
2) **Inside the Space Ships,** by George Adamski. Introduction by Charlotte Blodget. Foreword by Desmond Leslie. New York, Abelard-Schuman, 1955. 256 pp.
3) **The Secret of the Saucers**, by Orfeo Angelucci. Edited by Ray Palmer. Amherst Press, Amherst Wisconsin, 1955. 167 pp.
4) **Aboard a Flying Saucer.** by Truman Bethurum. DeVorss & Co., Los Angeles, 1954. 192 pp.
5) **The White Sands Incident**, by Daniel W. Fry. Introduction by Franklin Thomas, publisher. New Age Publishing Co., Los Angeles, 1954. 67 pp.
6) **I Rode a Flying Saucer!** by George W. Van Tassel. *2nd edition.* Introduction by Franklin Thomas, publisher. New Age Publishing Co., Los Angeles, 1952. 51 pp.
7) **The Saucers Speak! A Documentary Report of Interstellar Communication by Radio Telegraphy,** by George H. Williamson and Alfred C. Bailey. Introduction by Franklin Thomas, publisher. New Age Publishing Co., Los Angeles, 1954. 127 pp.
8) **Other Tongues — Other Flesh: A Startling Sequel To "The Saucers Speak!"** by George Hunt Williamson. Amherst Press, Amherst, Wisconsin, "1953" (actually, 1957). 448 pp.

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lesson in biology

by LLOYD BIGGLE

A reporter's life is rough. He meets an interesting extraterrestial, and the air force promptly interferes!

I SPOTTED Johnny Kaiser in a little dump of a bar down on South Ashley Street. He was huddled in a rear booth, with a dozen empty beer bottles on his table, and a wobegone, half-drunken expression on his face. He'd sprouted a scraggly mustache since I last saw him. I wondered if it was meant to be a disguise.

You should remember Johnny. If you don't, maybe you'd recognize his picture. It was on the front page of every paper in the country. There was that television ceremony, too, when they gave him the ten thousand dollars reward money.

He's the cop that caught the Martians. Remember?

Of course they weren't really Martians. Nobody ever figured out exactly where they came from, but a lot of people called them Martians, and still do. And Johnny caught them.

I squeezed into the booth opposite Johnny, and said, "How's the old Martian chaser?"

He glared at me. "Scram!" he said. But I hadn't seen him since he got the ten grand—in fact, since he'd caught the

We've met all kinds of Martians by now, elongated grasshopper-like beings with a strange taste in music, humanoid Martians apparently hailing from Barsoom, and lovely chattering girls—green in color—whose laughter hides a deadly menace. Now, at last, we meet a sexy Martian.

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Martians—so I hung around and watched him put away another bottle of beer.

"With all that reward money, don't tell me you got troubles!" I said finally.

He set his glass down with a bang, and leaned across the table. "My wife left me," he said. "Every place we went, people were saying I didn't really know that dame was a Martian—I just followed her because she was a good-looking dame. Whenever a girl came along, someone would nudge me, and say, 'How about it, Johnny—another Martian?' And then some bum phoned my wife anonymously and said I was being transferred to the women's division so I could keep on looking for Martians. She got sore and left."

"How did you know that dame was a Martian?" I said.

He straightened up, and for a minute I thought he was going to start throwing bottles. But he didn't. He leaned across the table, and said, "Those Martians—they didn't have no sex."

I grinned. "Everyone that saw that dame said she was about the most sexy creature they'd ever seen."

"Sure, sure. She—I mean it—*looked* sexy. They could look any way they wanted to. Maybe the scientists understand that, now that they got some corpses to study, but they aren't talking. Anyway, I think this Martian saw a picture of a real sexy girl in a magazine, or somewhere, and just went around looking like that."

"And fooled heaven knows how many thousand people until Johnny Kaiser saw her," I said. "And Kaiser took one look, and said, 'There's a Martian!'"

Johnny held up one finger at the waiter. That's his idea of an insult. If I wanted to drink with him, I could buy my own. I held up a finger, and we each got a beer.

"Remember when all this started last April?" Johnny said. "All the papers were screaming about the flying saucer landing. Air Defense picked it up when it came barreling in from the Gulf of Mexico. Before a single jet got into the air over New Orleans, it'd already been lost in northern Wisconsin. And they had the army, and the air force, and the National Guard, and God knows what else looking for it. They didn't find anything, of course, and after while the excitement quieted down, and people forgot about it. Just someone having hallucinations, they said.

"The F B I kept right on checking, because the F B I knows that radar doesn't have hallucinations. In the meantime, those Martians were all over the place, looking like ordinary people, and nobody suspected anything. They'd have gotten away with it, too,

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except that they didn't have no sex, and they couldn't understand how it worked with us. They'd have gotten away with it anyway, except that one of the Martians pulled a boner."

I poured the rest of my bottle into the glass and held up two fingers. "I didn't hear about that," I said.

"It was kept quiet. But one of the Martians stayed a couple of weeks in a little rooming house over in Cheboygan, and when it moved out it left a notebook behind. The F B I got ahold of that notebook, and had it studied. The paper was some kind of stuff that the scientists couldn't analyze. The writing was strictly out of this world. And perfectly recorded on those pages were dozens of finger marks, smooth, elongated finger marks. Finger marks without finger prints!

"That tipped the F B I off to the fact that the Martians were going around looking like ordinary human beings. They alerted all police departments in this country and Canada, and that was when I heard about the Martians—or aliens, as the F B I called them.

"An F B I man came through and briefed us. 'I think,' he said, 'the thing that will solve this for us is psychology. Even if these aliens look like humans, their psychology is bound to be worlds away from ours. Somewhere along the line, no matter how human they look, they're going to act peculiar. Be on the lookout for that.'

"We were ordered to watch for anyone acting out of character, or getting nosey about commonplace things. I thought that a little newspaper publicity would have turned up the Martians in short order. The Chief said no. Everyone and his brother would be imagining Martians. There would be a general panic, and the real Martians would know we were on to them. I see now that he was right. Even as it was, a lot of mildly eccentric citizens were hauled in for questioning.

"Anyway, I was vaguely on the lookout, never dreaming it would be me that spotted one of them. We got word that Spoofs Hamblin was back in town. I was working plain clothes at the time, and I dropped around to see him. He was staying at the Crown Hotel, which is a little dump of a building that serves as a natural collecting place for the scum that drifts into our fair city. I had a quiet talk with Spoofs. We didn't have anything on him that we could prove, but he wasn't certain about that. I managed to convince him that he and Crown City should go their separate ways, and then I went down and sat in the deserted lobby to see if I could spot any other objectionable characters.

"And in walked the dame.

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Classy. Long, silky-looking blonde hair. A dress that was practically screaming Fifth Avenue. A figure that was downright sultry, and a face you'd have to call beautiful.

"She walked over to the window and stood looking out for a few minutes, and then she headed for the stairway. No elevators in the Crown.

"I went over and woke up the room clerk. 'Who's the dame?' I said.

"She'd disappeared by then, but he knew who I meant. He whistled.

" 'That one,' I said. 'Who is she?'

" 'Miss Mary Smith. Don't get one like that very often.'

" 'You've never had one like that, and you know it,' I said.

"I went over to the pay phone, and called headquarters. 'I'm at the Crown Hotel,' I said, 'and I've just spotted a Martian.' I wasn't guessing. I *knew*."

"You took one look at that sexy dame," I said, "and you knew she didn't have any sex?"

He scowled, and I let him tell it his way. "I didn't know, then, about their not having no sex," I said. "I found that out later."

All of a sudden I felt horrified. I stood up. "Kaiser! Just how did you find out she had no sex?"

"Sit down," he said, and I sat.

"They put a team on it," he went on, "and we took turns tailing her. A lab team went over her room while she was out, and found a lot of those smooth finger marks, so we knew we were on the right track. The F B I moved in to supervise, and I got a promotion that was about four years overdue. We could have picked her up, of course, but we wanted her to lead us to the others.

"She never noticed that she was being tailed. Maybe all humans look alike to a Martian. Anyway, she spent some time in the library, and went on a free tour of the local brewery, and went to the movies a couple of times. Every now and then she'd call a cab and have herself driven out to the edge of town, and then she'd call another cab and have herself driven back. I never figured that out, unless she just liked to ride in cabs.

"She nosed around looking things over for a few days, and then one afternoon she checked out of the hotel, and took a cab to the bus station. I was in line behind her when she bought a ticket to Minneapolis. I bought a ticket to Minneapolis. I was in line behind her when she got on the bus. She took a seat by the window, and I sat down beside her. I wasn't taking any chances on her getting away without my knowing it.

"Just before we left I recognized an F B I man talking to the driver, and the driver took a good look at the girl

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and me, and nodded. As we pulled out of the station, I counted four police cars waiting in the street, and as soon as we were out of town I saw a helicopter circling overhead. Once a bunch of jets flew over. Someone a lot higher up than me wasn't taking any chances on her getting away, either.

"We rode west for maybe seventy or eighty miles, and it was just getting dark when she got off the bus out in the middle of nowhere. I waited until the driver was about to pull away, and then I dashed down the aisle and followed her. She was walking away down a side road, and I waited to give her a start. Then a car pulled up with the Chief and an F B I man.

"'We don't just want the girl,' the Chief said. 'We want the whole bunch, and most of all we want their ship. We'll try to stay with you, but we might lose you in the dark. Stay close to the girl, and if you spot the ship, throw this. There'll be plenty of us around to take over.'

"He handed me a grenade. 'What is it?' I said. 'A thermite grenade,' he said. 'It's fixed to make a big flash when it goes off, and it'll keep on burning for quite a while. Long enough. And it won't be easy for them to put it out.'

"I started off down the road after the girl. It was really getting dark, so I had to close the gap somewhat to keep her in sight. She walked past a couple of farm houses, and took another side road. I could hear the helicopter above me, though it was getting too dark to see. I signaled upward with a penlight I carried, and hoped the pilot would get the idea that we were turning.

"She walked for maybe a mile along the road, with me hugging the side and keeping off into the shadows. She turned off, finally, at a grass-grown driveway. There was a house there, and a barn, and I gathered that they were more or less deserted, though I couldn't see much. I heard the house door open and close. I signaled upwards once more, and then I started out working in towards the house.

"It was an odd night—dark and cloudy, but now and then the moon would break through the clouds and there would be some light. I got close enough to see that the windows on the house were boarded up. I was wondering what I should do next, and the problem was solved for me. Neatly. A heavy masculine voice said, 'You will come inside, please.'

"Something glittered in his hand. It didn't look like a gun, but I had a hunch it would be effective enough. I walked ahead of him very quietly.

"The rooms were bare and dusty, except for the living room, where eight or ten people were talking quietly in

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groups of two or three. It might have been a cocktail party, minus the drinks, or the aftermath of a PTA meeting —except for the language. Just an average gathering of people, some tall, some short, some thin, some fat. And there was Miss Smith, of course, who would have stood out in any gathering.

"The fellow that nabbed me nudged me out into the middle of the room. He looked like a prosperous business man, with grey hair, pot belly, and a conservative, expensive-looking suit. The others turned and stared, and then Miss Smith recognized me. She'd had plenty of time to look me over during that bus ride. She started to talk, and then the others chimed in, and the words flew pretty fast for a while—odd, hissing words that sounded like nothing I've ever heard before.

"An elderly-looking man stepped forward. 'Why are you here?' he said.

"I had my answer all ready. 'I saw this young lady on the bus,' I said. 'I don't see a good-looking girl like that every day, so I followed her on the chance I'd get to know her better.'

"They jabbered some more, and then the old man said, 'Why do you want to know her better?'

"I grinned. 'Why do you think?' I said.

"He looked puzzled. He said something, and Miss Smith said something, and then they were all talking at once. He silenced them, and started asking questions. What would I do if I got to know her? Would I—kiss her? And so on. I kept my answers as vague as possible, and finally the truth dawned on me. These Martians had no sex, and they just couldn't understand the way it worked with humans.

"They'd been here, then, for five months, studying the human race, and they still hadn't figured out sex. Of course sex was *the* thing in just about everything they saw—advertising, movies, magazines, books, not to mention the every-day lives of humans, and it had them plenty bothered. They gathered around and gaped, and jabbered like mad every time I answered a question.

"I believe they were rather pleased that a human was sexually attracted to one of them. They seemed to think they were going to get the problem settled right there. In fact, I was afraid they might ask for a demonstration, but they didn't. They just kept asking questions, and I kept making my answers as vague as possible. Another bunch of Martians walked in, and then another. I counted twenty.

"Finally the old man said, 'You would like to know Miss Smith better?'

"'I sure would,' I said.

"'Then you will come with us—with her,' he said.

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"I didn't welcome the idea of them taking me home with them to study my sex, but I said, 'Sure. Where is she going?'

"We went outside. There were four cars waiting. 'You will ride with Miss Smith,' the old man said. I heard the helicopter pass overhead, but I had no chance to signal. They'd been so interested in sex, though, that they hadn't searched me. I had my revolver in a shoulder holster, and I had the thermite grenade. I followed Miss Smith into the backseat of a car. The old man and a driver sat in front. The other Martians piled into the other cars, and we were off.

"We drove without lights, and I kept wondering if the helicopter or a police car would spot us. The old man kept looking out the window, but I knew he had his eyes on us. I had to put on an act.

"I took Miss Smith's hand, and the skin was cold and clammy—almost slimy to the touch. It made my flesh crawl.

"She made a quick report to the old man—on what was happening, I suppose. Maybe ten minutes later I gritted my teeth, and made myself put my arm around her. Another progress report. That soft-looking hair brushed against my face, and felt like snakes crawling there.

"I don't know what my next move would have been, if the cars hadn't pulled off to the side and stopped.

'Where are we?' I said.

"'You come with Miss Smith,' the old man said. Very politely, but very firmly.

"We started off across the field. I drew Miss Smith off to one side, thinking that would put me in a better position in case I had to run for it. I walked with my arm around her, and the others watched us with a kind of clinical curiosity.

"We crossed the field, went through a gate, and across another field. I figured my chance for outside help was just about gone. We approached a grove of trees. The moon came out, and I looked around and through the trees, and couldn't see a thing of interest. Then we stopped, and there was an odd, crackling sound, and there on the edge of the grove was their ship. I don't know how they had it hidden, but it was plenty effective. And the ship didn't look like a flying saucer—or any of the space ships you see drawings of. It looked more like g i g a n t i c bed springs, with a cabin attached.

"Miss Smith moved forward, and I followed her. When I was close enough, I threw that grenade, and ran like hell. There was a splash of light, and a sudden uproar behind me. I hit the dirt, and something snapped over my head. A bush twenty feet away flamed up suddenly, and died down. I crawled behind some rocks, and looked back.

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The thermite made a steady, blinding glow, and the Martians were hopping around in confusion. I saw one coming out of the cabin with something in his hand. 'Fire extinguisher,' I thought, and I fired twice. He fell, and I emptied my revolver at the rest, and started to crawl away. I heard that snapping again, all around me, and some grass on the edge of the grove caught fire.

"Then the jets came in. They really plastered that place, and I was caught in the concussion. When I woke up, I was a hero."

"You were a hero," I said, and I meant it.

"I don't know—I keep wondering if those Martians really meant us any harm. I wonder if they weren't just trying to study us—like a bunch of professors going to Africa to study the natives."

"If so," I said, "they used the wrong approach."

"Yes. And it was kind of stupid of them not to understand sex, even if they don't have none."

"You still didn't tell me how you knew the dame was a Martian."

"I did," he said. "I told you, they didn't have no sex, and they didn't understand how it works with us."

"So you just took a look at that sexy dame, and you. . ."

"Look," he said. "The Crown Hotel is a dump of a place. The women you see in there are always frowzy, and usually less than honorable. So when you see a really gorgeous doll like that, dressed like a million dollars, you just naturally get curious.

"And you know damn well something's funny when you see her coming out of the wrong rest room!"

NEXT MONTH —

Ken Bulmer describes what can happen to Tomorrow's henpecked husband in ***By the Beard of the Comet***

Henry Slesar introduces us to a fabulous person in ***My Father the Cat***

Theodore Pratt writes about what is correctly called ***Inside Stuff***

David C. Knight describes the most unusual love affair in history in ***The Love of Frank Nineteen***

L. Sprague de Camp reports on the incredible ***Ignatius Donnelly, Pseudomath***

and

Alan E. Nourse describes a fantastic experiment in his exciting full length novel ***Bear Trap***

—*in* FANTASTIC UNIVERSE

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the bluebird planet

by ROBERT F. YOUNG

She'd never seen so many birds. The woods were blue with them. And then a bird perched on her shoulder!

THE SHIP had landed in a clearing in a forest. The grass was jet-burned just beneath it, but a little ways away the grass was green, and dancing in a summer wind. And beyond the dancing grass the forest trees curtsied like timid girls in new summer dresses.

Miss Mintz could hardly believe her eyes. They'd *said* that Deneb 6 was a lovely planet, and they'd *said* that once you landed there you'd never want to leave; and they'd *said,* just wait till you see the moon! But Miss Mintz was invariably skeptical of the third person plural, particularly when it referred to travel agency pitchmen, and she'd taken what *they* had said with several grains of salt.

But she needn't have, she saw now. She climbed the rest of the way down the disembarking stairs and stepped into the dancing grass. The Senior Class came tumbling down behind her, laughing and shouting like the kids they really were beneath the blase exteriors they had affected throughout the trip. There was a winy tang to the

Robert F. Young, author of WISH UPON A STAR, our lead novel in our December 1956 issue, works in a machine shop in upstate New York and usually writes stories critical of tomorrow's machine age. Here is a gentler story, however, an exception—the story of a lonely woman, and a bird.

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sparkling air, and winsome little white clouds hung high in the bright blue sky.

In the clearing the whole class began talking at once:

"Did you ever *see* such green grass?"

"Just *look* at that sky!"

"Say— There's a bluebird!"

"Where?"

"Over t h e r e! Why— There's another!"

"And *another!*"

Miss Mintz saw them then. The forest was full of them. Her heart began to pound. It pounded even harder when Chief Petty Officer Burke, whose responsibility it was to see that excursion parties got started off on the right foot, appeared in the ship's lock at the top of the stairs and raised his hand for silence.

"The bluebirds can wait," he said when the seniors had quieted. He pointed to where Deneb blazed like a macrocosmic gasoline lantern in the middle of the afternoon sky. "When that sun sets, it's going to get dark awful quick, so what you kids had better do is start setting up camp right away—unless you want to spend another night aboard ship."

There was a chorus of "Oh no's!" and "I should say not's!" followed by enthusiastic activity. Miss Mintz took command in her capacity as chaperon and oversaw the unloading of the collapsible camp-village. After consulting with Mr. Burke she selected a site at the edge of the forest conveniently close to an effervescent brook. The Jiffy Huts were set up in a jiffy, and by the time the first night shadows had begun to creep in out of the forest there was a little plastic village nestling at the feet of the trees within shouting distance of the ship. Shortly thereafter a portable generator began to hum, and newstrung electric lights came to radiant life along Little Main Street and shone warmly from the square screened windows of the huts.

The Mess Hut had been assembled with loving care and a little after sundown it was ceremoniously christened the Deneb Six Cafe. After the christening the male division of the Senior Class carried the treasured provisions from the ship's deep freeze across the clearing to the kitchen where the female division took over the task of preparing the first cooked meal the class had had since leaving Earth. Everyone got in each other's way, and Miss Mintz found herself involved in a chaos of kids whose appetites had merely been stimulated by the condensed breakfast, lunch, and dinner tablets which Excursion Lines, Inc., called food, but presently the chaos gave way to a semblance of order and after awhile the aroma of pork chops and scalloped potatoes rode appetizingly on the night air of Deneb 6.

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Miss Mintz was afraid, at first, that Mr. Burke had forgotten her invitation, and she was relieved when she finally saw him come striding up Little Main Street, bedecked in his spaceman's blues. She met him just outside the entrance. "Welcome to the Deneb Six Cafe," she said.

Mr. Burke sniffed the night air. "Smells almost li' pork chops," he said. "But of course that's impossible. You couldn't *really* be having pork chops."

"Oh yes we could," Miss Mintz said, "and we're having scalloped potatoes with them. Come on in, Mr. Burke. We're just starting to serve."

There were three long collapsible tables and two small ones. Miss Mintz chose one of the small ones, a little apart from the others, and one of the senior girls came over and took their order. Mr. Burke winked at her just as though she were a regular waitress, just as though he and Miss Mintz had been out doing the town and had stopped in for a bite to eat before grabbing a skycar home.

Looking at him across the little table, Miss Mintz could hardly believe the last three days. The first one had been the most incredible of all. That was when Mr. Burke had said good morning to her on the passenger deck and had stopped to pass the time of day. He had never even noticed her before and Miss Mintz was sure it was the dress she was wearing that had caught his eye. It was a new dress, one of the two she'd bought especially for the trip—a novelty number with an upturned collar and a girlish swirl skirt that was guaranteed to make you look younger and feel younger.

She had been sure at first that it was the dress, but the next day she wasn't quite so sure, because on that day she wore her ordinary lounging slacks and her ship and planet blouse with the little space ships stenciled on it, and Mr. Burke said good morning to her anyway, and stopped for an even longer time to pass the time of day. He'd had a great deal to say that morning, particularly about the monotony of the ration tablets. He'd reminisced a little about the "old days", only it was a sort of vicarious reminiscing, for Mr. Burke was much too young to have had much to do with the "old days." He was around Miss Mintz's age, and Miss Mintz was only twenty-nine.

"Can you imagine, Miss Mintz!" he had said. "They used to serve hot beans for breakfast on the first star ships. *Hot* beans, mind you! And I've heard—though I don't believe it for one minute!—that the crews used to gripe about the chow. Imagine anybody griping about real beans! They should have had condensed ones, then they'd really have had some-

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thing to gripe about!"

That night she hadn't been able to get him out of her mind and she'd had a silly dream about him—one that made her blush the next morning when he stopped to talk to her on the passenger deck just after the ship had come out of transphotic and Deneb 6 was a gauzy ball of blue yarn in the viewplates. He'd gone into more detail about the monotony of the chow, and that was when the inspiration had come to her, when she'd said, vibrant with sudden singing happiness, "Why Mr. Burke, why don't you eat with *us* during stop-over? We've brought all our own food from home and we're going to cook our own meals for a whole week. I'm sure you'll like some of the things we have."

That was the way it had happened, but it was still hard to believe, even with Mr. Burke sitting across the table from her, smiling his disarming smile, his carefree blue eyes lighting up when the "waitress" brought over two plates heaped with scalloped potatoes and pork chops. The pork chops were a little on the crisp side, but they tasted so good that Miss Mintz, who ordinarily ate like a bird, had two of them. Mr. Burke had five.

After the meal she walked to the end of Little Main Street with him. "You know," she said, as they paused beneath the last light bulb, "I think I'm going to love it here."

"It sure is a pretty place," Mr. Burke said.

"All those bluebirds! I think we should call it Maeterlinck's Planet, don't you?"

"Did *he* discover it? I thought it was a trader by the name of Schmidt who landed here first."

"I—I didn't mean it quite that way," Miss Mintz said... "But we could call it the Bluebird Planet. That would be just as good."

"Sounds all right to me," Mr. Burke said. He raised his fingers to his lips, stifling a small burp. "Excuse me, Miss Mintz," he said. "I guess I ate too much. But everything was so good I couldn't help it... Well, I've got to be getting shipside."

"Oh... Are you on duty, Mr. Burke?"

"We're short-handed, or I wouldn't be. Imagine a C.P.O. having to pull the first watch! But there's nothing I can do except make the best of it. Good night, Miss Mintz." He started to turn away.

"You'll be with us for breakfast, won't you, Mr. Burke?" Miss Mintz said. "We're having bacon and eggs."

"*Eggs? Real* eggs, Miss Mintz? Not powdered, pulverized, condensed or synthetic?"

"Why of course real eggs!"

"Miss Mintz, you're a

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dream!" Mr. Burke said. "I could kiss you!" For a moment Miss Mintz thought he was going to, but he didn't. Instead he raised his blue kepi and executed an exaggerated bow. "I'll be waiting at your doorstep. Good night, Miss Mintz."

"Good night, Mr. Burke."

She watched him walk across the clearing toward the ship. The huge Deneb 6 moon was rising behind her, infiltrating the forest with silver, turning the clearing into an argent lake. The silvered ship was like a peaceful church steeple on a still summer's night on Earth, and Mr. Burke was a lonely silver figure wading through silver-drenched grass. For a moment Miss Mintz could hardly breathe. Abruptly she turned and ran like a high school girl up Little Main Street to her hut.

Betty Lou Faraday, one of her two hut mates, awakened her the following morning. "Miss Mintz! Miss Mintz! Look! I've caught a bluebird!"

It was the second time in twenty-four hours that Miss Mintz could hardly believe her eyes. She rubbed them to make sure that she was really awake and not having another silly dream, but when she got through rubbing them Betty Lou was still standing by her bed and the bluebird was still perched charmingly on Betty Lou's forefinger. Its plumage was even bluer than Betty Lou's eyes.

"See, Miss Mintz? I'm going to build a cage for it with my Do-It-Yourself Kit!"

"Why, it's beautiful, Betty Lou. How did you catch it?"

"Oh, they're easy to catch, Miss Mintz. All you do is walk into the woods and they fly right up to you. All the kids are out looking for them. Why don't *you* catch one, Miss Mintz? I'll build a cage for you to keep it in."

Why not indeed! A bluebird would just match the way she felt. She heard her happiness singing inside of her. "I think I will, Betty Lou," she said, getting up. "I—I've always wanted a bluebird..."

Miss Mintz had never seen so m a n y birds. The woods were blue with them. And she had hardly gone two steps before one of them—the bluest one of all, it seemed—flew right down from a leafy limb and perched upon her shoulder. Miss Mintz trembled with e x c i t e m e n t. She raised her forefinger to her shoulder and the bluebird hopped daintily upon it, its tiny golden eyes twinkling in the sunlight.

And as though that were not enough, when she returned to her hut there was Mr. Burke waiting on her doorstep just as he had promised. "Good morning, Miss

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Mintz," he said. "I see you've been joining the youngsters in bluebird hunting."

"Oh, I have, Mr. Burke! Why, I never saw so many bluebirds!"

Betty Lou came out of the hut then with two plastic cages. One of them already had a blue occupant and she exhibited it proudly. She gave the other cage to Miss Mintz. "Thank you, Betty Lou," Miss Mintz said. She put her bluebird into the cage, secured the little door, and carried the cage into the hut and placed it on top of her collapsible wardrobe. Then she returned to the street and walked with Mr. Burke to the Deneb Six Cafe.

In every hut they passed, enthusiastic seniors, breakfast forgotten, were hard at work with their Do-It-Yourself Kits fashioning plastic cages. Bluebirds were everywhere—perched on youthful shoulders, on roof peaks, on door sills; weaving ephemeral blue patterns in the sparkling summer air.

Miss Mintz shook her head in wonderment. "Are all the birds on Deneb 6 blue, Mr. Burke?" she asked.

"I've heard they are," Mr. Burke said. "I've heard other things about them too. For instance, they're hypersensitive: when you catch one and keep it, it reflects the way you feel—something like a dog, only more so."

"Why I didn't know that, Mr. Burke. It's funny the guidebook doesn't say anything about it. The guidebook doesn't even mention bluebirds."

"Guidebooks!" Mr. Burke said. "What the people who write guidebooks don't know would fill a thousand times as many books as they write! I'll bet your guidebook doesn't mention the Deneb 6 Exodus either."

"Why no, it doesn't," Miss Mintz said.

"About a thousand years ago—long before we had space travel—the original natives took off and never came back. I don't mean all at once, of course, but over a period of three or four centuries. They're scattered all over the galaxy now, I've read. They—"

"But why? Why did they leave, Mr. Burke?"

"*Why?*" He stared at her. "Now that's a silly question if I ever heard one, Miss Mintz. Why wouldn't they leave once they'd developed a technology that enabled them to? There's nothing here but trees, and trees aren't good for anything any more. Everything's made of metal now, and there isn't a decent ore deposit left on the whole planet. And there's hardly an ounce of uranium either!"

"Oh..." Miss Mintz said.

They were at the entrance to the Deneb Six Cafe by

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then, and Mr. Burke sniffed the morning air. "Bacon and eggs," he breathed. "Real, honest to God bacon and eggs! Miss Mintz, I love you!"

It was a purely hyperbolic remark of course, but it left Miss Mintz breathless just the same. She could hardly speak all through breakfast, but then, speech wouldn't have been appropriate anyway, for Mr. Burke was too preoccupied with his bacon and eggs. Miss Mintz was a little bit awed by his appetite, but then of course you had to figure that the poor man had been eating ration tablets for at least a third of his life, and anyway, six eggs wasn't such an awful lot for a robust man to put away. Lots of people ate six eggs for breakfast. She'd have liked to see him eat twelve, for that matter: it made her happy to be able to give something away. She'd never had much of anything to give before...

The meal over, she went out to the kitchen and got a handful of bread crumbs for her bluebird, then she walked with Mr. Burke to the end of Little Main Street. "You'll have lunch with us, won't you, Mr. Burke?"

"I'm afraid I'm taking advantage of you, Miss Mintz. I don't want to eat up *all* your food on you."

"Oh, don't worry about that. We've got plenty—more than we'll ever be able to get away with by ourselves. And we're awfully glad to have you with us."

"Well, in that case, it would be sort of foolish for me to stay away, wouldn't it?" Mr. Burke smiled his disarming smile, exposing his white, even teeth to the morning sunlight. He doffed his kepi in the charming way he had, and executed his exaggerated little bow. "I'll be waiting at your doorstep," he said.

And he was. And he was waiting there again for dinner. Miss Mintz accompanied him part way back to the ship that night. The full moon was rising—on Deneb 6 there was always a full moon; the guidebook had got that much right—and once again the ship seemed like a church steeple, all soft and silvered, the forest like a tossed silver sea around it, the grass so drenched with silver that it splashed on your shoes when you walked through it and splotched your legs with evanescent patterns...

"Well, I've got to get shipside, Miss Mintz. That watch again."

"You'll be with us for breakfast, won't you? We're having wheatcakes and sausage."

"Real, honest to God sausage?"

"Why of course real sau-

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sage. Don't you like sausage, Mr. Burke?"

"Do I like it? Miss Mintz, I love it! And I love you too!" He doffed his kepi and executed his bow. "I'll be waiting at the usual corner of your doorstep. Good night, Miss Mintz."

"Good night, Mr. Burke."

THE next morning Miss Mintz couldn't get over how blue her bluebird was. It put Betty Lou's to shame, and beside it Teresa Best's—her other hut mate—seemed positively lacklustre—as thin and pinched and colorless as Teresa herself.

"Gosh, you found the bluest bird on the whole planet, Miss Mintz," Betty Lou said.

"I'll say," Teresa said. "What do you feed it, Miss Mintz?"

"A few bread crumbs from the kitchen is all," Miss Mintz said. "Birds don't require much food."

"I feed mine bread crumbs too, but it doesn't seem to fill out. It looks like it's half starved."

"So does mine," Betty Lou said... "Are you coming to the Farewell Dance, Miss Mintz? We're holding it in the Deneb Six Cafe."

"Why of course. I *have* to be there."

"Oh, I didn't mean in your *official* capacity, Miss Mintz." Betty Lou lowered her blue eyes. "I thought maybe you'd ask that handsome officer who eats with us."

Miss Mintz turned pink. "I—I never thought about that."

"I bet he'd like to come. Why don't you ask him?"

"Maybe I will," Miss Mintz said. She finished dressing and made her cot, her heart singing. It had been years since she'd danced. Lonely years. Her breath caught in her throat. I wonder if he *would* come, she thought. I could wear my new white dress with the star and galaxy sequins. It's just decollete enough for such an occasion, and it's really not *too* young for me.

The invitation trembled on her lips during breakfast and during lunch and during dinner; but it wasn't until she was walking part way back to the ship with Mr. Burke that she found the courage to deliver it.

For a moment Mr. Burke was silent. "Of course I'd *like* to come, Miss Mintz," he said finally. "But you see it's that first watch—"

"Oh..." Miss Mintz wilted in the moonlight. "I—I forgot all about that, Mr. Burke."

"We're so short handed it's pretty hard to get relief. ...I *could* ask someone to take my place for awhile, though—long enough to drop in for a couple of dances. How would that be?"

"Oh, that'll be fine, Mr.

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Burke. I— We'll be ever so glad to have you."

"We'll leave it that way then... See you in the morning, Miss Mintz. The usual corner of your doorstep."

"Good night, Mr. Burke."

The days flew by. The seniors fished, hunted, played tennis, baseball, badminton and scuffle; laughed and sang; had ephemeral romances and brief broken hearts—

And one by one, their bluebirds sickened and died...

Miss Mintz couldn't understand it. If what Mr. Burke had said was true, their bluebirds should have been blue and beautiful with so much happiness to reflect, for she had never seen a happier bunch of kids in all her life.

Morning was at seven in her own world, and all of her hillsides were dew-pearled. Day after day, before her shining eyes, Mr. Burke ate his way through roast beef, southern fried chicken, Virginia ham, Venerian swamp duck, and Martian *pfail;* smiling his disarming smile and exposing his even white teeth, doffing his kepi and showing his wavy brown hair, uttering his outlandish hyperboles and making his nightly quip about her doorstep. Her own bluebird was a thing to behold: it was so brightly blue it almost hurt her eyes to look at it, and it grew more and more beautiful every day.

Finally the night of the dance arrived.

"Why what's the matter, Betty Lou?" Miss Mintz asked, coming into the hut after her nightly walk with Mr. Burke.

Betty Lou raised her tear-wet face from her pillow. "Everything," she said. "Just everything's the matter!"

Miss Mintz sat down on the edge of the cot and lent Betty Lou her handkerchief. "Everything can't be the matter, Betty Lou. One or two things, but not everything. Why don't you tell me what's wrong?"

"It's my dress, Miss Mintz," Betty Lou said. "The one I was planning to wear to the dance. I forgot to pack it and now I won't be able to go. And my bluebird's dead!"

"Dead?" Miss Mintz got up and looked into the cage. She saw a motionless little heap of faded blue feathers. "Did you feed it every day, Betty Lou? It looks so thin, so starved—"

"Why of course I fed it! I fed it just as much as you feed yours. But it didn't do any good, it kept getting thinner and thinner all the time, and tonight when I looked in the cage it was dead!"

She began to cry again and Miss Mintz patted her shoulder. "Why such a silly thing to cry about," she said. "Tomorrow you can catch another bluebird, and I'm sure one of the other girls has an

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extra dress they can let you take."

"No!" Betty Lou said. "The only extra dresses they've got are rags, and I won't wear them. I won't!"

She was crying harder than ever. Miss Mintz walked nervously around the hut. In a way it was a shame to be as beautiful as Betty Lou was, she thought. Being beautiful warped your perspective; it made you too self-centered. Betty Lou would be attractive no matter what she wore to the dance, but being merely attractive wasn't enough: she had to be the most attractive, the cynosure—

Of course I could let her take *my* dress, Miss Mintz thought.

But I'm not going to! Why should I?. I've looked forward all week to wearing it. It's the most beautiful thing I have, and—and Mr. Burke is the most beautiful thing that's ever happened to me. There'll be hundreds of dances for Betty Lou. There may never be another one for me.

She went over and sat on her cot.

Of course I could wear my second best one—the plain one without the stars—

But I'm not going to! Betty Lou is young—she'll get over having to go to one dance in a not-quite-new dress. She'll be the center of attraction anyway. All the young men will flock around her the way they always have—the way they always will. They never flocked around me. Never, no matter what I wore, and now, just when, when—I'm simply *not* going to let her take it...

Presently she gave a little sigh. She got up and opened her collapsible wardrobe and unhooked the dress from its hanger. The stars winked in the electric lights, the galaxies pinwheeled; the dress itself snowed in billows and flurries to the floor. Miss Mintz choked back a little sob as she carried it over to Betty Lou's cot. She patted Betty Lou on the shoulder. "Here," she said, "you can wear my dress. I'm sure it will fit you, and I wasn't going to wear it anyway. It's much too young for me..."

The seniors had brought along a payload of canned music. Most of it was ultra-modern — incomprehensible, that is, to anyone past the age of eighteen. But there were a few old numbers mixed in with the scintillating array of avant-garde pieces—ones that had been around when Miss Mintz had gone on *her* Senior Trip.

She stood by the soft drink dispenser listening to them, watching the kids dance incongruous dances to them. Remembering.

The soft drink dispenser was opposite the door, and

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standing by it, Miss Mintz had a good view of Little Main Street, silvered with moonlight now, despite its tinselly electric lights, and if anyone were to come striding in the direction of the Deneb Six Cafe, she would be the first to see him.

But no one came striding in the direction of the Deneb Six Cafe, and the little musical minutes accumulated, became an hour. Two hours... The dancers whirled and pirouetted, and young faces swam dreamily in the subdued light of muted electric light bulbs.

He probably couldn't get anyone to relieve him, Miss Mintz thought, sipping her fourth Centaurian fizz. I wonder if he can hear the music from there. I'll bet he can. His post must be outside the ship. It must be lonely, standing there all alone in the moonlight—

One of the senior boys came over and asked her to dance. Laughing, Miss Mintz shook her head. "You go ahead and dance with your girl," she said, looking over the youthful shoulder at empty Little Main Street. "Never mind your Ancient Literature teacher."

His girl of the moment was Betty Lou Faraday. Miss Mintz watched them as they floated away. Betty Lou was like a silver snowstorm on a summer's night, all white flakes and flashing stars and coruscating galaxies. It made Miss Mintz's chest feel tight just to see her, she was so beautiful.

I wonder what made her bluebird die, she thought. She's so happy— All of them are so happy. Why didn't their bluebirds reflect their happiness instead of dying? Maybe they're just ordinary birds after all. Maybe they don't reflect anything but hunger. Maybe bread crumbs really aren't enough to keep them alive. Maybe they're nothing but sparrows in bluebirds' plumage.

But bread crumbs seem to be enough for mine. Mine certainly isn't sickly. Mine is beautiful. And it *must* be beautiful because I'm happy, because I'm happier than Betty Lou, than the others. And I am happy. So very very happy...

She glanced up Little Main Street again. It was just as empty as the last time she had glanced up it. He'll never come now, she thought. You'd think there'd be at least one of his ship mates who'd be decent enough to relieve him for a little while. Unless, unless he forgot—

But that was absurd. Mr. Burke had never forgotten before. He had never neglected a single invitation; he'd always been there waiting "at her doorstep" just as he'd promised. And tonight he'd been there just as punctually as usual to help finish up

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the left-overs. He'd really helped to finish them up, too: his stalwart appetite had been just the right supplement to the stalwart appetites of the seniors; there hadn't even been enough food left to prepare a snack for the dance—

A rather horrid suspicion obtruded itself into Miss Mintz's mind. She swayed momentarily, her paper cup of Centaurian fizz almost slipping from her fingers. She set the cup down and gripped the handle of the dispenser for support.

But she recovered herself quickly. She forced a laugh to her trembling lips. I *am* a paranoid old maid! she thought: thinking things like that. Why, Mr Burke is the nicest person I've ever met; he couldn't possibly have any but the highest motives. He's probably standing by the ship right now, listening to the music, just wishing he could join us here. Standing there all alone in the moonlight, watching the stars.

All alone. I'll bet he'd love to have someone to talk to. I'll bet—

She knew that if she hesitated she wouldn't obey the impulse, and she wanted desperately to obey it. She slipped out of the Deneb Six Cafe and ran up Little Main Street. The clearing was a silver dream, and the ship was more like a church steeple than ever—a church steeple overlooking an imaginary village on a tropical Christmas Eve. Miss Mintz's heart pounded as she ran through the gossamer night, her shadow playfully traipsing before her. The church steeple grew out of the moonlight, resolved gradually into the ship it really was, and the companionway light gleamed through the open lock, pale and sickly against the argent grandeur all a ound it.

Apparently Mr. Burke's post wasn't at t e base of the ship as she had thought. Miss Mintz paused at the foot of the disembarking stairs, looking about her. Suddenly she heard voices coming from the open lock, voices accompanied by a peculiar rattling sound. One voice in particular—

"Seven again!" the voice in particular said.

"That finishes me," another voice said.

"Me too," still another voice said. "You're hot tonight, Burke."

"That's because I've been eating right," the voice in particular said. "You guys don't have foresight. You see an old maid school teacher with a payload of chow under her fingertips and you don't even think to play up to her. Now you take me—"

Miss Mintz stood just within the door of her hut, afraid to turn on the light. She was sure that her bluebird was dead.

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She felt her way through the darkness to her cot. Her eyes had dried by now, but her shoulders still shook. She saw the small dark blur of the cage on top of her collapsible wardrobe and she visualized the little pile of faded blue feathers inside of it. Suddenly she couldn't stand it any more and she switched on her cot lamp with a convulsive jerk of her fingers.

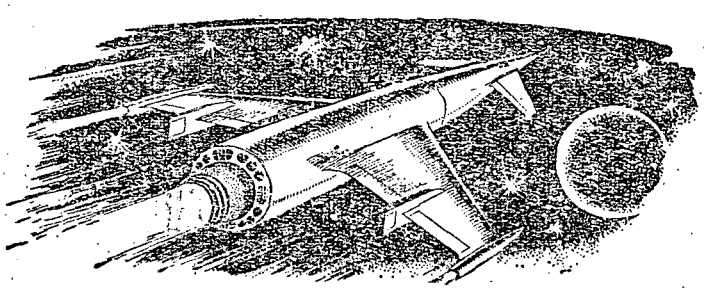
And then she gasped. For her bluebird wasn't dead at all. It was even bluer than it had been before. It was a vivid flame of blue, a beautiful shining flame—

Miss Mintz sat there looking at it for a long time, and as she looked it seemed to become bluer and bluer. Presently she heard the soft sound of footsteps in Little Main Street and she switched off the light and went to the door. A boy and a girl were walking in the moonlight, hand in hand. The girl was wearing a white dress frosted with stars and galaxies, a snowfall of a dress, a lovely snowfall of a dress on a summer's night.

Miss Mintz watched them pass. She saw their moon-softened faces. She saw Betty Lou's face. Her breath caught in her throat. Betty Lou's face had changed. The dress and the moonlight had subtly altered it, had lent it a serenity and a maturity it had never known before—transformed its tinselly prettiness into something very close to beauty.

I helped create this moment, Miss Mintz thought. I made this moment possible.

She stood in the doorway long after the couple had gone by. She felt her happiness glowing warmly inside of her, the ordinary quiet kind that never sang false tunes, the kind that was uniquely her own; the calm, trusting, generous kind that was an inseparable part of her, that throbbed deep within her in cadence with the rhythmic beating of her heart.



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shapes in the sky

by CIVILIAN SAUCER INTELLIGENCE

What is the explanation for strange droning sounds made by many UFOs, specially when seen at closer range?

IN OUR LAST article *(Fantastic Universe,* September), we presented a speculative case for the proposition that some UFOs may be a kind of animal life. However, many UFOs give the impression of being mechanical constructions, rather than living beings. We now propose to exhibit some examples of *noisy* UFOs, and these mostly seem to fall into the "mechanical" class.

Many writers on the subject have pointed out that a notable peculiarity of UFO phenomena is the *silence* of the objects' passage through the sky. It is possible to overstress this: in many cases, as when the object is at a great distance or is seen from the inside of a noisy airplane, the observer could hardly hear any sounds even if they existed. Also, there is nothing extraordinary about a UFOs silence if it is not traveling at a very high speed. But there are many cases in which this silence really *is* extraordinary. Unlike a bullet, a meteorite, or anything else that we know of, a flying saucer can dart at supersonic velocity

The Research Section of Civilian Saucer Intelligence now discusses acoustic, phenomena, "sounds in the sky", in their fifth column on UFO sightings and reports, written specially for this magazine. CSI publishes a newsletter and has an extensive file of material on the subject.

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through our atmosphere "like a ghost," without provoking the scream of violently displaced air, as it "ought" to. No one understands how this apparent violation of physical laws is brought about, though there have been a number of attempts to explain it; Lt. Plantier, for example, tries to show that a "propulsion field" would produce the observed effect. (*La Propulsion des Soucoupes Volantes*, Editions Mame, Paris, 1955.) Even in the rare cases where sounds *are* heard to issue from an observed object, they are seldom aero-dynamic noises—as a rule, they might be described as "engine" sounds.

Of course this abnormal soundlessness at high speed could be accounted for if what is seen is not really a material body at all, but only a moving spot of light, like that from a searchlight, which would naturally not disturb any air in its passage. Donald Menzel wrote a very readable book (*Flying Saucers*, Harvard, 1953) inspired by this idea, and his views still have some currency among those who don't look into the matter very thoroughly. For example, we find Lester del Rey winding up his lively article "The Saucer Myth" (*Fantastic Universe*, August) with the blithe assertion that "most of the objects could be caused by refraction in the air; Menzel has demonstrated how this might work." *O sancta simplicitas!* Let us examine the Air Force's findings on the subject in its Project Blue Book Special Report # 14. In Table A-1, we find that of the 3200 sightings reported in the period 1947-1952, the Project's expert consultants (hardly saucer cultists) deemed only 1.8% to be reasonably explicable as "light phenomena." Further comment on this naive conjecture seems unnecessary.

UFOs that make noises are almost, though not quite, as uncommon as those that can be explained away by Menzel's theories. Even so, there are far more examples than we have room to quote. Readers of Charles Fort will recall that this feature turns up in a number of the nineteenth-century cases he collected. We will mention only the "headless monster" (or construction). There are numerous attachments," that made such a noise that it woke up the pastor of the Methodist church of Crawfordsville, Indiana, at 2 a.m. on Sept. 5, 1891 (p. 637, omnibus edition). There are numerous others; among the several examples of cigar-shaped bodies carrying lights which Fort chronicles, the sound of a motor is mentioned more than once.

Among the more recent references, we have an abundance of data. Three months before Kenneth Arnold's historic sighting, the following re-

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markable observation had been made by Mary Schwarzkopf of Woodland Hills, California, if we may believe her letter printed in *Fate*, October 1952. Here is her account, somewhat condensed:

"About 4 in the afternoon in late March of 1947, I was looking out over the San Fernando Valley from the window of my home. To the northwest I saw something like a squadron of planes, stretched out in a 'V' formation. From their fluttering and undulating sort of flight, I thought for a moment that I was watching birds. However, these things were flashing like bright aluminum. Then they veered southward, toward my end of the valley. I was surprised to see that they were not silvery after all, but a dull glowing pale gold. As they drew closer, they seemed to be about as long as the fuselage of a good-sized plane, and in profile looked about the shape of a fuselage without any wings or tail, only somewhat thicker at the center. There were at least eleven of them. I'd say they weren't going more than 150 m.p.h., and were 2500 to 3000 feet up. I noticed they made a kind of hollow clattering: clap, clop, clap, clop.

"It appeared as though the object at the center of the 'V' was towing the others, which were strung out behind it, although I could not see that they were tied in any way. I could not discern any openings, landing gear, or exhaust. If anyone rides in the things I don't know how they keep from getting seasick because the ones I saw swung from side to side just like a top does when it is about to stop spinning.

"I watched them until they disappeared behind the high hill to my right.

"It was not until June 24th, when Kenneth Arnold's story came out, that I began to have some idea of what I'd watched in blissful ignorance."

The wavering flight noted here is highly characteristic; the sound described, however, seems to be unique. A more "typical" example was described three years later in a letter to CSI President John Du Barry, who was then the Aviation Editor of *True* magazine; the writer was Major Herbert W. Taylor of the Army Signal Corps Reserve, who lived in Clarksburg, California. His letter is somewhat condensed:

"On March 13, 1950, at 5:00 a.m., I was awakened by the unusual sound of a motor. Thinking our washer must have turned on, I arose to investigate. Finding nothing amiss in the laundry room, I started toward the garage to check our water pump. On opening the back door, I saw a tremendous light in the back yard and was certain the sound accompanied it.

"I hurried to waken my

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wife, asking her to come quickly 'to see the flying saucer everyone is talking about.' Until this time, neither of us had believed there were any flying discs, as had been reported. She immediately followed me, expecting to see some little silver 'thing' floating in the air. She also heard the loud noise of droning motors, but did not think the sound was connected with the phenomenon she was about to see.

"What we saw, looking into the sky from our back porch doorway, was both amazing and awe-inspiring. As we looked out, a tremendous orange-cast object, as brilliant as light can be, was coming at a fast pace toward the earth. The droning increased in volume as it came closer. The object's position was easterly, slightly left of the waning moon. After several seconds, or perhaps a minute or two, it seemed to hang suspended in the air and hovered with a slight swaying motion from left to right. It continued to hover for fifteen or twenty minutes, during which the sound remained *constantly* the same.

"They sky was cloudless, dark, and star-studded. The object was perfectly silhouetted against this background and seemed to be saucer-shaped. Its edges were smooth and its surface was unmarked. It cast no rays of light or reflection—it was just a solid, brilliant mass. There was no accompanying vapor or mist. We watched, astounded, not knowing what to expect.

"At the end of fifteen or twenty minutes, the object ceased hovering and started back in the direction from which it had come. As it receded, at the same speed as its descent, *the droning-motor sound diminished as did the size of the disc.*

"It was impossible to estimate the size of the disc, as we were unable to determine its distance. At its nearest point, the object looked about one-half the size of the moon, which on that morning was one-quarter full. We checked the time when we could no longer see any trace of the object in the sky. It was exactly 5:30 a.m. (PST)."

Something like this was seen and heard again over Camp Drum (near Watertown, N. Y.) on the night of September 25, 1952, according to Kenneth Banghart's news broadcast the following evening: many soldiers watched a 20-foot disc with red "exhaust flame" that circled and hovered over the base for half an hour, making a whining noise "like a dynamo."

But these are night-time observations; more can be seen by daylight. At 7 a. m. on March 29th, 1950, two real-estate salesmen fishing on Marrowbone Lake, near Nash-

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ville, Tennessee, were startled by a group of dark objects that whined overhead. According to the Nashville *Tennesseean* of March 30, D. C. Whiteside, 2212 Lindell Avenue, and Howard T. Williams, 312 East Thompson Lane, saw "between six and 12 dark objects about five feet long" fly overhead and pass behind a hill about 7 a. m. The sky was overcast at the time.

"I heard them first," Whiteside said. "The noise was like the wind blowing through the trees. They were about the size of a 300-pound bomb, and had no motor, but but they were traveling faster than any airplane I ever saw. They were fairly close together, and they all turned together."

"I was baiting my hook," Williams declared. "When I looked up, they were splitting the air open right above my head. They were 200 to 300 feet high and traveling at least 500 miles an hour. They were black, and round, and heavy. Whiteside saw the same thing. It's strange, but a man knows what he sees."

The fishermen said the "saucers" appeared from the southeast, tured into the west, and disappeared in a matter of seconds behind the hills enclosing the lake, all the while losing altitude steadily. The men left the lake at once and reported their experience to James W. Davis, lake superintendent. "They were scared," he said. "One of them told me it made his hair stand on end."

Spokesmen at Sewart Air Force Base said the objects could not have been jet planes, which never fly that low over this part of the country, especially under an overcast sky.

A unique description of a noisy UFO was given on April 26, 1954 by Russell M. Peirce, an architect of 55 Pleasant St., Newburyport, Mass. At about 3:30 p.m. he was standing outside the local high school, talking with two friends. All suddenly heard "a very loud, deep roar, like many heavy-duty truck motors all revving up at the same time." Mr. Peirce looked up and saw "a flaming ring", between whitish and flame-color, moving downward and to the right, high in the southeastern sky. A small, bright disc of the same color as the ring was inside, it, touching its lower left quadrant. "The remainder of the center of the ring appeared dark." He had the impression that the object was several miles distant from him. "Then the object seemed to stop, waver, and 'skid around' for a few seconds, after which it went sharply upward and to the right, disappearing from sight very quickly. It did not decrease much in size, rather just faded out of sight. At the same time the appearance changed to that of a solid, slivery-colored disc.

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The size appeared slightly smaller than a full moon." The sound was heard by many others, including the high school truant officer, who looked out too late to see the UFO; it lasted about five seconds, and the object was in view for about twenty. Mr. Peirce has excellent distance vision, and is considered a reliable witness. (Newburyport *News*, April 30, and personal letter from Mr. Peirce.)

A widely-publicized UFO, seen by tens of thousands, was the "half-cigar" that flew over Rome, Italy in the early evening of September 18, 1954. Michael Chinigo, INS correspondent in Rome, was one of the eye—and ear—witnesses!

"What attracted my attention was the strange sound the object emitted as it passed overhead", wrote Chinigo (N. Y. *Journal-American*, Sept. 19.) "Previous reports of flying saucers have described them as emitting no sound. The sound from this object was not like the whine of a jet or the droning of an ordinary plane. Rather it was like approaching thunder, but with a staccato effect: a series of explosions that grew louder as the object got closer. This was followed by dead silence as the "thing" stopped, apparently at a height of about 5000-6000 feet.

"After several minutes, it suddenly shot upward. It went straight up vertically into the sky, leaving an exhaust trail of milky white smoke. The air was perfectly still, and the smoke remained in a vertical trail.

"To me its shape seemed like an inverted sawed-off come.

"The radar station at Ciampio Airport (Rome) said that the object registered on their screens for a total of 39 minutes."

The most recent example of "UFOgenic" sounds, as this is written, comes to us in a letter from UFO researcher Jim McAshan of Knoxville, Tennessee. The witness, a 35-year-old woman living some ten miles from Knoxville, requested anonymity. She is familiar with jet aircraft and is locally considered a reliable person. At 4:40 p.m. on May 21, 1957, she became aware of an oval or round object approaching in the sky from the southeast, making a noise "like a runaway power mower." She said it was travelling "just above treetop level", and "seemed to bounce along slowly, making this racket." It was metallic, "like a silver dollar", flat or flattish, and appeared to be about six or seven feet in diameter. Unique detail: she described "a stem, or pipe, about three feet long, which seemed to be perforated by a row of holes down its entire length, sticking out of the top." When this object reached a point almost directly overhead, it stopped—like the Roman object—and all noise ceased. After a few moments, it resumed its course

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toward the northwest, but now *without any sound*. It was her impression that after proceeding for a few hundred feet, it descended among some pine trees, however, a diligent search of the area the next day revealed no traces. She and her husband made inquiries in the neighborhood, but could find no one else who had seen the object.

When a UFO is seen at very close range, engine sounds of some sort are usually heard. The Lloyd Booth sighting (FU, May) is an example; and we will conclude this selection with two further instances of this type of report. We cannot, of course, be positive that these stories are veracious ones; but it may be remarked that the first is one of the twelve cases chosen as "the cream of the crop" by Project Blue Book in its Special Report #14, of 1955. We reproduce the Report's account, slightly condensed. The observer's name was Bill Squyres, and the place Pittsburg, Kansas.

"At 5:35 a.m. on August 25, 1952, a musician for a radio station, driving to work, noticed an object hovering about ten feet above a field near the road. As he came abreast of it, he stopped his car and got out to watch. Having an artificial leg, he could not leave the road, since the surrounding terrain was rough; however, the object was only about 100 yards from him. It was not absolutely still, but seemed to rock slightly as it hovered. When he turned off the motor of his car, he could hear a deep throbbing sound coming from the object. As he got out of the car, it began a vertical ascent, with a sound similar to 'a large covey of quail all starting to fly at one time', and ascended vertically through broken clouds until out of sight. The observer states that the vegetation was blown about by the object when it was near the ground.

"Description of the object: It was about 75 feet long, 45 feet wide, and 15 feet thick, shaped like two oval meat platters placed together. It was a dull aluminum color, and had a smooth surface. A medium-blue continuous light shone through the one window in the front section. Through this window the head and shoulders of a man, sitting motionless, were visible.

"In the midsection of the ship were several windows extending from the top to the near edge; these had a blue light, which gradually changed to different shades. There was a large amount of activity and movement in the midsection that could not be identified as either human or mechanical. There were no windows, doors or portholes, vents, seams, etc. visible to the observer in the rear section or underside of the object. A series of propellers 6

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to 12 inches in diameter were spaced closely together along the outer edge of the object; these propellers were mounted on a bracket so that they rotated in a horizontal plane. The propellers were rotating at a high rate of speed.

"Investigation of the area soon afterward showed some evidence of vegetation being blown around. Reliability of the observer was considered good."

On the evening of Sunday, Oct. 25, 1953, at about 9:30 p.m., 16-year-old Jimmie Milligan of Santa Fe, New Mexico was driving home from a dance at the Young People's Fellowship when something "came sailing in front of my headlights, so close that I thought I was going to hit it. It looked like a piece of metal blown across the highway by the wind. But then I realized that there wasn't any wind. I slammed on my brakes and turned off the road to the left, where I saw it go. I got out and went up close to it. was setting in the brush at the the side of the road. I just had the light of the moon to go by, but it looked something like a boat-hull—or like two boat hulls stuck together. It was a gunmetal color, sort of like a dull aluminum. I would say it was about three feet high, and ten feet long, and about five feet across."

Taken aback by the weirdness of this unrecognizeable object, Jimmie reached out to touch it. At that moment, it "began roaring, and raised straight up in the air a couple of feet"; then it shot forward in a steep climb toward Santa Fe and was lost in the night. "It made a sound like a washing-machine motor, but even faster; or sort of like a model airplane engine, only not so high-pitched. There wasn't any glow or spitting of fire. There wasn't any heat or smell."

"You should have seen him when he came in the door", his mother said. "He was white and shaky and he looked so odd." She said Jimmy had never been known as overly imaginative. He is a good student, and "has never been especially interested in aircraft or rocket-ships." (Santa Fe *New Mexican,* Nov. 3, 1953.)

These cases show similarities, but they demonstrate once more *the incorrigible diversity of the flying saucers.* In our next article we will take up an acoustic phenomenon that is strikingly *constant* in its manifestations—the so-called "sky-quakes"—and we will inquire to what extent it can be linked with the presence of unknown objects in the sky.

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daughter of tomorrow

by F. B. BRYNING

The problem was to isolate her until they knew how she would react. She must meet as few people as possible.

AN END came at last to the pain and the effort. As she sank down, exhausted, she heard the doctor slap her newly-born. She tried to speak, but the whiff of anaesthetic reached her, and she managed only a weak croak and a flutter of her hand. Before she went under she heard a second slap, but no first cry...

Awakening warm and languid, she lay for a few seconds, wondering at the sense of foreboding and despair, until her soreness and the scent of anaesthetic reminded her. She stirred, and a young nurse was by her side, smiling.

"Comfortable, Dr. Buckley? Would you like a cup of tea?"

"Thank you... Tell me, Nurse—the baby—"

Already on her way to the door, the nurse looked back over her shoulder.

"Matron will be here in a few moments. She wanted to see you as soon as you awoke."

That seemed ominous. Something to be broken gently... Either the baby was stillborn or—or— Tears for which she despised herself

Frank B. Bryning, who makes one of his much too rare appearances in these pages, was Guest of Honor at the Fifth Australian Convention, organized by the Melbourne Science Fiction Group and held in Melbourne last year, on December 8 and 9, 1956, at the close of the Olympic Games.

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ran across her cheeks and she was too weak to hold them back. She was ashamed of herself, a mature woman, a seasoned scientist, a disciplined mind, for letting her fears and conjectures run away with her like any frightened girl. Yet she could not regain control.

For she was afraid, she acknowledged, to hear what the matron would have to tell. And because she *was* a scientist—and in particular a specialist in the mutations caused by radio-activity—she understood better than almost anyone else what there might be to fear. The birth had been nearly two weeks overdue... Tears again... She let them come as she told herself that a stillborn baby, in most people's view, was a merciful deliverance compared with what a mutant infant could be...

Fumbling beneath her pillow she vainly sought a handkerchief. She had gambled against the longest odds and she deserved to lose.

Widowed eight months before, and knowing that the child, if she bore it, would almost inevitably be mutated by the same radio-activity which had caused her husband's death, Elizabeth Buckley had taken the gamble, and unscientifically hoped against hope—and against the statistics—for a normal child. At the sound of footsteps in the corridor outside she desperately dabbed her eyes with the sheet, and sniffed. The nurse entered, and held the door open.

Wild hope struggled with the fear in her heart as she saw the bundle in the matron's arms.

"No need to look so tragic, Dr. Buckley," smiled the matron. "You have a dear little daughter!"

The nurse helped her raise her head and shoulders, and arranged the pillows.

"Normal?"

"Examine her yourself." The matron laid the bundle in her arms.

Elizabeth Buckley laid trembling fingers on the shawl. For some moments she hesitated, eyes closed. Then she gently parted the folds.

The baby was asleep—face and head normal. Quickly, but ever so tenderly, she examined the tiny hands and feet, counted fingers and toes, felt the arms and shoulders through the sleeves, lifted the nightdress and inspected the legs and body.

Suddenly she raised the disarrayed bundle to her bosom. "Thank Heaven!" she whispered fervently. "She's just a normal little girl!"

The matron smiled benignly. "Almost."

"Almost?" repeated Elizabeth Buckley, sharply. "What do you mean? She's perfectly formed!"

"She is," Matron nodded.

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"However, examine her skin again."

Gently drawing back the shawl once more, Elizabeth Buckley tucked a finger into the baby's curled hand.

"The colouring, you mean? She *is* a very delicate pink—skin almost transparent—hair and brows white—what there are of them. An—an albino?"

"Possibly," agreed the matron. "Typical albinoid skin and hair—but not the eyes. They are not typical of the newly-born albino's, which develop into pink or very pale blue. See how dark they show, even now, through her closed lids. Open, they're as black as ink."

Elizabeth Buckley gazed at her daughter in silence. The baby's little face grimaced and twisted as she wakened from sleep.

"Is there anything else ab—abnormal, Matron? Has she been through all the tests?"

"There is one other thing, which you will see now, for she is about to cry," said the matron. "Otherwise she seems perfectly normal by all the tests we are able to make in the first few hours of a baby's life."

With relief in her heart, mixed with a remnant of fear, Elizabeth Buckley watched her baby's puckering face as the black eyes opened briefly and closed again. The tiny thing seemed to take a long time preparing to cry. For several seconds she wore the anguished expression, she rehearsed the slow exhalation, the catch, and the fierce, throat-straining intake of breath—but she uttered no sound. Then, as she continued in the same way, with only the rasping intake but no vocalized sound, the mother realized that this was the actual crying of her baby...

"Some vocal defect—?"

"She cries without uttering a sound," confirmed the matron. "She fooled the doctor the moment she was born. He slapped her—"

"Twice," interjected Elizabeth Buckley. "I remember that—"

Suddenly she held the baby close as her fears gave way to a great flood of tenderness. And just as suddenly, the crying stopped.

"If that is all," she said, quietly, "I have been very fortunate indeed."

"You have," confirmed the matron. "There are no ugly deformities. And an albino can be very attractive to look upon, especially if the eyes are dark."

"The voice—do you think it might be possible to do something?"

"We can only know about that later on—after proper examination. In the circumstances, and knowing what I know about mutant babies, you have done very well."

"I am well pleased with my

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daughter," acknowledged Elizabeth Buckley, smiling contentedly. "Oh! She's trying to feed! A bit early, isn't it?"

"Encourage her—all the same."

Almost at once, however, the first signs of yet another peculiarity in this infant began to appear, the significance of which was not immediately recognized.

After several minutes' thorough-going attempts at feeding, to the great physical and emotional content of her mother, the child had buried her head in the cleavage of her mother's bosom, and slept.

"You needn't hold her high up there," said the matron. "You'll find it tiring. Now she's sleeping let her down on to your lap."

"I've tried already," replied Elizabeth Buckley. "But she's holding on to my nightdress and won't let go." She slowly took her arms away from the baby. "See—she just clings more tightly and presses herself closer." She smiled wistfully. "I must say I like it."

"I think I can understand something of the very special meaning this baby has for you, Dr. Buckley," said the matron. "Nevertheless, she must not be permitted to tire you out. At this stage, you know, the mother needs even more care than the baby."

Gently she placed her hands on the child's wrappings, only to draw back quickly and look surprise into the no less startled eyes of the mother. For at the instant of her touch she had felt the child stiffen and shrink closer.

"Goodness" exclaimed Elizabeth Buckley. "She's clinging like a limpet, and just boring her head into me! Can she—do you think there's any harm in her staying here a while? I feel it's what she wants above all things, for some reason—and I know it's something I like—"

"No doubt what *she* wants," agreed the matron, smiling broadly. "And if she wants it as fiercely as that I think she had better have it—within reason. I've never known such a possessive little minx before! So I'll give her a quarter of an hour—say, twenty minutes at the most—unless you feel you want to go to sleep sooner. Then she must go back to the nursery, no matter what happens. You must get *your* rest."

On exactly the twentieth minute Matron returned.

"I didn't think you'd ring. But I thought you might have fallen asleep by now."

"Nothing could have induced me to do either, Matron." The baby was now in the crook of one arm. "She's relaxed now, and asleep still."

But even as the matron took the baby, ever so gently, she felt an immediate protest-

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ing tenseness seize the little body. "I'll be back in a moment," she said as the baby, now awake and squirming, began crying in her queer, soundless way.

And so it was, four times a day for three more days. While mother and daughter grew closer to one another and the routine of feeding became well established, so also the vehemence and duration of the baby's protest at each separation from her mother increased. Until, on the fifth day, there was neither sleep nor cessation of crying for the infant except when in her mother's arms or by her side.

By then, satisfied with the mother's progress, and feeling that the daughter was now the one to be concerned about, the matron amended the procedure.

"You know, of course, Dr. Buckley, that standard routines are not necessarily suitable to all babies, and are still less likely to apply to mutants," she explained. "So I am going to suggest that from today your baby shall remain in this room with you. You are well rested now, and won't lose any necessary sleep as a result. But I fancy it is becoming necessary for the progress of your baby that she shall go no longer without the sleep which she cannot have, it seems, without being close to you."

"Nothing would please me more," beamed Elizabeth Buckley. "She is certainly a very good baby while she is in here."

"And a most unhappy baby when she is away from you. I want to suggest that we consult Dr. Ballantine when he calls today."

"Dr. James Ballantine, the psychiatrist?"

"Yes—do you know him?"

"My late husband did. But why a psychiatrist? You scare me—"

Laying a hand on Elizabeth Buckley's shoulder the matron wordlessly indicated the baby, who had become restless, and was crying.

"That is why, I think."

"What do you mean?"

"Notice that after you began to feel afraid or alarmed at my suggestion—and I think you are only mildly alarmed—the child herself has begun to act as if alarmed, and has begun to cry."

"A dream?"

"She wasn't asleep. And she's rather young to dream, although it may not be impossible. I had something else in mind."

"You think my state of mind—my fear, if you like—infected her?"

"Something like that. I am coming to suspect that this baby is specially sensitive to what might be called the prevailing emotional tone about her."

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"Aren't all babies more or less that way?"

"'More or less', as you say. So are adults. We can all sense fear, or joy, or other emotions when people generate them strongly enough in our presence. Adults usually control their responses, but babies reveal their distress, pleasure, excitement, and so on, more readily. Even so, unless a child is in, say, the centre of a violent emotional outburst, its reaction is relatively slow and mild. But your baby reacts instantly and vigorously. And she reacts, it seems, to the slightest emotional changes. She appears to be affected even by unexpressed, momentary irritations, fleeting fears, passing moments of tenderness, and so on."

"How can you tell that, Matron?"

"From my own experience in handling her—observation of the child in the nursery amongst the other babies, and when she is being handled by the nurses. But I may be wrong. That's why I'd like Dr. Ballantine's opinion."

After some briefing by the matron over a cup of tea, Dr. James Ballantine inspected Baby Buckley while a nurse bathed her. The child cried silently all the time. After the baby was returned to her mother for feeding he spent some time questioning the nurses. When his round brought him to Dr. Buckley's room, he found the baby lying awake in the crook of her mother's arm.

During introductions the child stopped moving arms and legs, and lay still.

"I would like, Dr. Buckley—" he began, but stopped speaking as the baby suddenly began to cry. Clutching her mother's bed-jacket she hauled herself close.

Mother and doctor looked at one another.

"She suspects you, Doctor!' smiled Elizabeth Buckley. "This is her usual reaction when the nurses come for her."

"I was going to ask if I may pick her up. I want to feel that physical resistance she offers to being separated from you."

"Of course, Doctor."

"It would seem that the idea is already resented," he remarked, for before he laid his hands upon the baby she was squirming and burrowing her head closer against her mother. When he touched her the little body tensed and clung more tightly. He lifted her an inch or two and the tiny hands hung on to the bed-jacket and dragged it with her.

Ballantine held her thus for a few seconds, and then, shaking his head whimsically, returned her to her mother's bosom. The child snuggled

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in and immediately stopped crying.

"You would think she sensed what I intended to do before I spoke about it, or moved," commented Ballantine, thoughtfully. "And now she seems to be aware of my present intention not to disturb her again. Otherwise I'd think she would take longer to settle down."

"You think, then, Dr. Ballantine, that there is something in Matron's idea that she's specially sensitive to the emotional climate about her?"

"That may well be close to the truth—or only part of it. Of course we need to study the case much more. We haven't enough data yet to go beyond careful under-statement. Suppose I see you again in a few days' time, and meanwhile you and Matron record every incident you observe of what appears to be an awaresness on the child's part of other people's emotional or mental attitudes while in her presence?"

"Keep a log of the experiment, as it were?"

"Precisely, Dr. Buckley. Something you will know well how to do."

"I'll try," she smiled. "But I can't promise the proper scientific detachment!"

In Matron's office, three days later, Dr. Ballantine waved the "log sheets" before him.

"Little that's new, but plenty of confirmation of what we already had. 'Baby cries when other babies cry...is happy only in mother's presence, and when mother is happy... baby reacts, cries, when nurse arrives to take her from mother...baby happy while mother bathes her but cries when others do so...mother startled—or upset even briefly—baby in her presence tenses and cries...mother relaxed and contented, baby gurgling happily...*et cetera, et cetera* baby's emotional reactions are prompt, strong, or instantaneous, compared with relatively slow and ambiguous reactions of normal infants.'"

"I wish you could see for yourself, Doctor, a clear cut example—"

"I intend to, Matron, immediately, if possible."

Elizabeth Buckley lay contendly watching her baby, who lay in her crib beside the bed, awake, grimacing, hands and feet moving spasmodically. A quick glance showed Ballantine the situation.

"What would you say, Dr. Buckley, if I were to propose complete separation of yourself from the baby for at least one month?" he asked, his eyes not on the mother but on the child.

As he finished speaking the child's contentment vanished, her hands and feet stopped waving. She began to cry in her silent fashion, but vehe-

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mently—writhing and kicking violently.

Turning to Elizabeth Buckley, who had begun to speak, Ballantine found her sitting up, with startled and protesting eyes.

"I would demand to know why, Dr. Ballantine!"

He smiled. "Forgive me, please! I really have no such cruel intention. I asked you that so that I could see for myself the way your baby reacts to your moods. I think it confirms a conclusion I am coming to."

"And what is that?"

"Look at her," he said. "I think there is little doubt that that protest is her expression of the sudden dismay, fear, resentment, or whatever emotions *you* felt when I suggested separating you. I suspect that this baby may possess the nearest thing to genuine telepathy we—"

"Telepathy! You mean she—she can read other people's thoughts?"

"Not exactly. We can find that out only when she's old enough to have thoughts herself and understand them—when she has accumulated enough experiences to be capable of the associations with which thinking begins. At present she has to get along with instincts, feelings, emotions. But these she can evidently apprehend from others to an exceptional degree—and they stimulate strong reactions in her, as you see."

"But that's not really telepathy, is it?"

"In the sense that the 'pathy' in telepathy refers to feelings and emotions—its true meaning, mind you—it is. I am sure the baby received none of my *thoughts*, and when I spoke to you she couldn't *understand*. But you understood, and you could not prevent your emotions of fear, dismay, hostility, or whatever they were. Immediately the baby reacted and cried—apparently with dismay, fear, or whatever it was. Until that moment, presumably, she was contented and relaxed within your enveloping—ah—'aura of contentment', if I may use such an unscientific term."

Elizabeth Buckley turned to look again at the child.

"She's settling down, now."

"Yes—now that your fears are going."

"You were very cruel," said Elizabeth Buckley, but she flashed a smile. "But you are forgiven, provided you do not mean to separate us at all?"

"The last thing in the world I would prescribe." Ballantine walked around the bed, took the child from the crib and laid her in her mother's arms, where she instantly snuggled close and relaxed. "I am going to suggest, on the contrary, that your baby needs, above all, close contact—and perhaps exclusively—

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with her mother for the first few months, and probably the early years of her life, in a way that other babies don't."

"I don't think I see, quite—"

"If she should really be a telepath—emotional or mental, or both—she is going to be affected by the passing emotions or thoughts of everyone who comes near her. How is she going to get on in a group of people or in a crowd? There will be a virtual babel of impulses and ideas whirling about her and pouring her and pouring through her! What chance will she have of being herself, of developing her own personality, of protecting her innermost self from invasion? How can she protect her mind and her emotional make-up from—well—from distortion or, perhaps, deformity?"

The baby was restless again, boring her head into her mother's cleavage. Elizabeth Buckley embraced her gently.

"You frighten me, Doctor—"

"And the baby—through you," he admitted, pointing to the writhing infant. "But there is my answer, too. You are her refuge now—and you will have to be for a long time to come. All of us are supposed to want to crawl back into the security of the womb, away from the 'slings and arrows' of a tough world. Physically we can't. Mentally or emotionally most of us try. A telepath would be under much more than normal pressure to try. I think that is what your baby is trying now."

"But what can I do for her?"

"What you are instinctively doing now. What her mother is above everyone else best fitted to do. Enfold her—with love and protection. Make certain that in your arms she can always find a welcome, and warm, protective strength. You can be for her a haven of understanding and calm confidence. While she is in your arms think no thoughts of fear and give way to no feelings of weakness. In that way you may insulate her, as it were, against the clamour of other people's emotions and thoughts. And if she is a telepath she might well learn from you how to face up to situations, and control herself."

"But what about the many hours we can't be just like this—in one another's arms? There's a limit—"

"That is a problem."

Ballantine took a chair and sat astride it with his arms crossed on the back.

"I think the only thing might be to isolate the child from all but a few controlled contacts with people until we can learn how she reacts. I would like to prescribe a cabin on a mountain top..." He shrugged. "But you will

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want to continue to live and work at the Institute, won't you?"

"I live now in a penthouse on the rooftop of the main Institute building—six floors up. That's almost a cabin on a mountain top!"

"Sounds promising. Many people on the floors just below you?"

"No. The sixth houses our reference library and part of records files; the fifth—mainly records and records clerks' offices. Only a few people at a time are ever on those two floors."

"Might I inspect the premises and the room you intend for the nursery, before you take the baby home?"

"Certainly."

"And might it be possible to rearrange those floors somewhat to keep all personnel as far as possible from the nursery?"

"I think so. But how long, Doctor, do you think the child will have to be isolated from all but 'screened' visitors?"

"Until we find she has developed the necessary defences—or doesn't need any."

"Defenses?"

Ballantine took some time to consider his answer.

"If we are right in thinking she is a telepath," he said at last, "she will be plunged into that babel of emotional and mental impulses whenever she enters a group of people. Still more so in a crowd. The effect of that could be devastating. Her sanity—even her survival—might well be in hazard."

"As serious as that?"

"It could be. Try to imagine what it would do to ourselves, for example—adults with already well-established personalities, relatively stabilised emotions and mental balance—to suddenly find ourselves registering telepathically, like it or not, the mental and emotional conflicts and stresses of a dozen or more people at once. Or perhaps being caught up in the hysteria, depression, terror, irrationality, of some person or persons in the grip of overpowering emotion. And no shutting it out, either, like shutting the eyes or plugging the ears."

"And to do one's own thinking," added Elizabeth Buckley, taking up the thread, "or to try to preserve one's own personal integrity, would be well night hopeless... And we are adults, with mental and emotional control of a sort, and already developed personalities... What chance, though, for a newly born baby...? My poor darling—!"

Ballantine watched her in silence for a few moments while the implications sank in. Then he rose and went to the window.

"I am not trying to flatter you, Dr. Buckley, when I say that it is fortunate for this

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baby that you are her mother. You are trained as a scientist to study and observe new phenomena, to recognise significant detail, to collate evidence, to make logical deductions, and to verify your conclusions. I think you are going to need all your scientific training as well as your maternal instincts in bringing up this child."

"I think you do flatter me, Dr. Ballantine. And the responsibility you indicate for me is—is appalling!"

Ballantine returned to his chair, and leaning over it, elbows on its back, spoke earnestly.

"The responsibility may be greater than you realise yet, Dr. Buckley. You have borne one of the special children of the atomic age. Your daughter is one of the increasing generation of mutants in whom *homo sapiens* reaches a crossroads. Through the ill-favoured among them our race could very likely go astray. Through the well-favoured it might possibly take big strides forward."

"Forward to what, I wonder?"

Ballantine spread his hands.

"Who knows? But forward, anyway. It is possible that amongst these children—especially amongst those with such potentialities as your baby—we may already have the progenitors of *homo superior*..."

Elizabeth Buckley lifted her infant so that the snowy down on the little head lay against her cheek.

"I don't know that I want such an honour for her...I think I want only that she shall know such happiness as I have known...that she shall fulfil herself truly and completely ..."

"Whatever that fulfilment may be," added Ballantine, significantly. "It will be for us to help how we can."

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universe in books

by HANS STEFAN SANTESSON

A discussion of some short stories, an unusual novel, some books on Saucers, and comments on ultra-Ufology.

BEFORE we comment on some recently published material on Ufology, let us discuss, briefly, some books of special interest to you the science fiction reader.

First, if you haven't already done so, get Judith Merril's new anthology tonight! Buying books is a good habit, by the way! SF: THE YEAR'S GREATEST SCIENCE-FICTION AND FANTASY (Dell, 35 cents; Gnome Press, $3.95), very correctly described as "*The* Anthology of the Year", has some excellent stories by Cyril Kornbluth, Isaac Asimov, Damon Knight, Theodore Sturgeon, and others. Warmly recommended!

And if you haven't already done so, be sure to read Robert Silverberg's interesting THE 13th IMMORTAL (Ace, 35 cents). Bob, who is still in his early twenties, is a prolific but increasingly interesting writer whose work should be watched. Here is a portrait of the world during the Years of the Freeze, the several hundred years after the almost total global destruction of 2062 when mankind, mutant as

There have been several reasons for the failure of this column to appear regularly. The paucity of material was partly responsible, as well as other factors. The column will appear more regularly now, bringing you news and comments on books which should interest you, the reader.

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well as non-mutant, maintains a rigid cultural stasis while slowly rebuilding. You will find yourself hoping, as this reader did, for the success of the hero in his fight against this world in stasis—this world which comes to life before your eyes with a vividness and an effectiveness which is testimony to the professional competence of the author.

James Blish's THE FROZEN YEAR (Ballantine, 35 cents) has much of the careful craftsmanship that distinguishes his work, though the reader may feel that Julian Cole, who takes part in the disastrous Second Western Polar Basin expedition, is a strange and rather complicated man by some standards.

Ballantine's new collection of stories by Frederik Pohl THE CASE AGAINST TOMORROW (Ballantine, 35 cents) reflects much of the biting quality which distinguishes his writing and which rather justfies the statement that the author is "practically required reading for any science ficion fan worthy of the name."

To turn now to Ufology—the lines are being more sharply drawn, today, and the difference becoming obvious, between the men and the women who see in Ufology an intellectual challenge in an age where surprisingly few secrets are left for us to explain or theorize about, and the men who interpret, often mystically, sightings and alleged contacts with extraterrestrials. As has been pointed out in Isabel Davis' article in this issue, and in John Nicholson's article on Contact Cases in our August issue, there is a disturbing pattern to many of these Contact Cases and to the writings of the more metaphysically minded contactees, which is not reassuring to those who hesitate to accept blindly and blandly, the statements made on behalf of the Space Brothers.

One thing should be made clear, however. Scepticism about the origin or inspiration of many of these messages, does not necessarily imply rejection of the spirit of the messages themselves. The truths in these messages are often older than our civilization and older than our own racial memory. They are truths which have been repeatedly brought to us, and their repetition at this time, whether by men from Mars or Venus, or by men who tell us that they have seen those men, does not affect their moral validity. Nevertheless, while perhaps we ought not to question the present sincerity of some of these reformed publicans and Pharisees, we may be forgiven if we hesitate to completely accept the messages in some of their works.

While M. K. Jessup's THE EXPANDING CASE

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THE UFO (Citadel, $3.95) appears to have been rather sadly edited, the author, as usual, is responsible for an unusual and interesting contribution to the subject. Jessup, in addition to suggesting that the Moon is a base for UFO activity, believes that the world's scattered pigmy tribes may have a common—and startling—origin.

Dr. Leon Davidson, 64 Prospect Street, White Plains N. Y., advises us that a few copies are still available of his excellent FLYING SAUCERS (Davidson, $1), an analysis of the Air Force Project Blue Book Special Report No. 14 (dated May 1955).

Arthur Constance, British saucer research man, author of the interesting THE INEXPLICABLE SKY (Citadel, $3.95), believes that, "we need to approach the inexplicable phenomena of the Cosmos with humility—with impartial minds, confessing ignorance and not bragging of what we know. This may be the attitude of mind for which visitants from other dimensions are waiting: it may be that our self-sufficiency, our arrogance-in-ignorance, prevents fuller understanding and fuller communication."

"Approaching the phenomena of the Cosmos", the author continues, "in a spirit of humility and faith in the Ultimate, our eyes can be opened to its infinite wonders and glories."

Roger Dard has published an interesting CHECK LIST OF FANTASTIC NOVELS (Dragon Press, GPO Box S 1387, Perth, Western Australia, price *2 sh 6 d*), recommended to the many who agree with August Derleth's statement in his introduction that Mary Gnaedinger made "available to thousands of new readers with limited funds old fantasy book-lengths ("gloriously imaginative adventures, decidedly romantic in nature") which had long been out of print and were to be found only in second-hand condition, often at inflated prices, in the shop."

Obviously this was not the fantasy and sf of the midfifties.....

NEXT MONTH—

CYRIL M. KORNBLUTH'S

REQUIEM FOR A SCIENTIST:
A Note on Ivan T. Sanderson

IVAN T. SANDERSON'S

COMMENTS FROM A SCIENTIST:
A Note to C. M. Kornbluth

—in FANTASTIC UNIVERSE

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the sinless village

by VINCENT STARRETT

It was a charming and beautiful story, beautifully told, but there was a note of stern justice, a disturbing note . . .

AS A NEWCOMER in the village I had not been brought up on the legend of old Traherne, as had my neighbors; so it was new and fascinating as I heard it for the first time.

I had seen the man himself only once, crossing the road with his ridiculous rubber plant in his arms, as if it were a child; and Wollston the druggist, who was with me at the time, told me his story.

"Oh, that's the old man who died in 1923," he grinned. "I thought everybody knew that story. But you're just a youngster in these parts, of course."

"Died in 1923!" I echoed incredulously.

"Yes, and went to 'Heaven' —or someplace—to hear him tell it." He chuckled reminiscently.

"A little 'tetched,' eh?"

"It could be; but he's sane enough about other things. Plays a fair hand at bridge; votes right; pays his bills promptly—the good citizen type, you know?" He coughed self-consciously. "But the way he tells it, well it's wonderful; you'd swear it was all

Vincent Starrett, distinguished novelist, anthologist and editor, who needs no introduction to any reader within range of his column in the Chicago Tribune *Book Section, turns here to a fantasy that can be said to reflect something of our times, and our curiosity about "Tomorrow".*

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true. He believes it himself, anyway."

"Tell me about it, Wollston," I said urgently.

"So you can make a story of it, eh? He wouldn't like that. But there isn't much to tell—in outline anyway. He died—to all appearances—in 1923. His heart stopped; even the doctor agreed to that. You read about such things in the papers. The undertaker was called in—his sister was living then—and between them they got him ready for burial. They nearly had him underground before he came to."

"He wasn't embalmed?"

"Well, no, I suppose not. This is a rural backwater, and thirty years ago it was even more primitive. When somebody died he was buried and that was all there was to it. I don't suppose anybody was ever buried alive, if that's what you're thinking. Generally when a man dies he's dead; it sort of sticks out. But this case was different. Anyway, they had him practically ready for burial when he came to; he'd been 'dead' then for about a day and a half, and I suppose it looked like a sure thing."

"It was a trance, then?"

"Something like that. Nobody knew what, least of all the doctor. 'Suspended animation,' somebody called it. Know what that means?"

"No," I said; "but I've read about it—in the newspapers."

"Anyway he woke up—awful hungry—and he's been living ever since, if you call it living. The whole town knows the story, and—"

"What about this—*er*—'Heaven'?" I interrupted. "You said—"

"No, that's what *he* said—or hinted—after he came to. He never did use the word *Heaven,* though we tried to get him to. He said he had died and gone to 'another and better world' where he had 'solved the infinite' and had some pretty marvelous experiences."

"What kind of experiences."

"He wouldn't tell. Said he was pledged to secrecy by somebody with a capital S. I remember I suggested Santa Claus, and he was insulted—a little scared, too, I thought. But it all *sounded* like 'Heaven' the way he told it: reverent and respectful and at the same time excited."

"Fantastic!" I said. "This 'S'—what did he sound like?"

"We never found out. That's all he ever told us. A lot of people thought he meant God Himself, of course; and you can imagine how he was kidded! But a lot of people believed it, too; a lot of the women, and of course the church people."

"But what about this 'Heaven'? Didn't he describe the place?"

Wollston was pretty vague. "It was all a bit childlike,

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really," he said. "Like a fairy tale; but beautiful too, if you know what I mean—no giants and princesses; just people. Maybe he'd read it all in a book sometime and remembered it; maybe it was a dream just before he came to—the doctor says that sort of thing happens. It seems like you've been dreaming for weeks, but actually it all happens in a couple of minutes before you wake up."

"That's true enough," I said. "What *kind* of people, Wollston?"

"Pretty much like ourselves, I thought; only more the way they ought to be than the way they are, if you know what I mean. No jails, no crime, no poverty—that sort of thing. There was a tollgate, I remember, and the fellow who was the keeper of the gate was one of their wise men."

"Mr. 'S,' maybe?"

"No, no; nothing like that. Mr. 'S' was quite another kettle of fish, believe me! He respected Mr. 'S'; but he was afraid of him, too. When he spoke of Mr. 'S' he was respectful and reverent, but he was scared too, plain scared."

"Jehovah himself!" I said.

"Could be," agreed Wollston. "But why not ask him yourself? He's really an awfully sweet old boy. You'll like him when you know him."

"I mean to," I said. "The first chance I get. I'm surprised that nobody ever questioned him further."

"Well, don't go 'way with that idea. He was questioned plenty. He was questioned—and kidded—until he shut up like a clam. We'll get the whole story one of these days. He can't live forever."

"What do you mean by that?"

"I forgot to tell you: he wrote it all down, right after it happened, for the benefit of posterity; and he keeps the manuscript in a private drawer in his desk. Ives, the lawyer, knows where it is. But of course it's not to be opened until he's dead—*really* dead, you know?"

"I suppose quite a lot of people are waiting for that day," I smiled.

"The whole town, that's all," said Wollston, grinning. "Think you can beat them to it?"

"You have a low opinion of journalists," I laughed "We're not *all* ghouls. But I certainly intend to ask Mr. Traherne about that manuscript."

"Ask him about that rubber plant while you're at it," chuckled Wollston. "He carries it around like a baby; takes it for a walk every afternoon at five o'clock."

"Oh, come off!" I said.

"You saw him just now, didn't you? But if you want to meet him, that's easy. He's quite friendly and harmless. Why don't you look up young

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Appling, the preacher? They're very good friends—I wouldn't be surprised if Appling has got the whole story out of him, quietly, by this time."

So I looked up Appling, the preacher, who had been needling me to come to his church anyway. He was friendly, and he understood my interest at once.

"But it would be a pity to dredge up that old story now, wouldn't it?" he urged. "Surely it can be allowed to rest after—what is it?—thirty or thirty-five years."

"You think it's just a 'story,' then?" I asked.

"I think Mr. Traherne had a very curious and remarkable experience," said the clergyman cautiously. "I don't pretend to understand it. But I take his word for it, and ask no questions—not now. I did at first, when I came here a couple of years ago and first heard the legend. He told me pretty much what he told others, I fancy, no more and no less; but unlike some others I didn't make fun of him."

"You believe he died and spent a day—a day and a half—in your Christian Heaven?" I challenged him.

The young clergyman spread his hands. "My dear sir," he replied, "I simply can't answer you. I simply don't know. I rather think—yes, I *do* think, since you press me—that I would be a little afraid *not* to believe him, if that is what he says. But, as I understand it, that is merely the popular idea of what he said; not the precise fact. There is no doubt that his extraordinary narrative does sound a bit like some of the visions in—shall I say?—the *Pilgrim's Progress,* or one of those grand old story-books; but Mr. Traherne has never to my knowledge used the word *Heaven.*"

"What about this mysterious Mr. 'S'?" I asked.

"*What* about him?" challenged the clergyman. "I know no more than you do; but I don't feel inclined to jest about Mr. Traherne's experience, whatever it may have been. He is a charming old man, and a thoroughly *good* man; that at least I know."

"I want to meet him," I said.

"Very well," said the clergyman after a brief pause. "If you will promise not to harass him, you may meet him here some afternoon. You are a resident here now, and it is as well that you should know each other. I think you will go away with a high opinion of his goodness and his intelligence. But I should not want anything like a cross-examination to occur, Mr. Collis. If he cares to tell you what he has told the rest of us, well and good; but I won't have any badgering."

"Fair enough," I said; and

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so it came about that I met old Traherne in the clergyman's sun parlor one afternoon; and he was everything everybody had said—sweet, charming, wistful, naive; and a little nervous when he spoke of my profession. He knew my name; I suppose Appling had told him about me.

"Men of your profession are strangers to me," he smiled. "I am, frankly, always a little on my guard."

He was curiously old, I thought; older even than he should be at seventy-five, which I gathered was about his recorded age. A descriptive line entered my mind: *Nobody knows how old he is. There are those who believe him to be well into his second century, and it would not surprise me to learn that he had supped with Solomon.* The piece might be called DEAD MAN TWICE, a senational title; but I have a sensational mind.

"We are frequently pretty rough customers," I conceded; "but I think you will find me a sympathetic listener, Mr. Traherne. You are English, aren't you? There was an old poet of your name, some centuries ago."

"Ah, you know about old Thomas Traherne, do you? Yes, I suppose—I should be proud, indeed, to think—he was one of my ancestors."

There was another listener in the room, no less sympathetic really than myself, but less diplomatic. Wollston the druggist, who had first told me about Traherne, had been asked in also—to give the meeting less an air of conspiracy, I suppose.

"Mr. Collis is interested in that peculiar experience of yours, years ago, Mr. Traherne," he began with an air of man to man candor that was in the circumstances almost miraculously untimely. Somehow it got us off on the wrong foot.

"I—I gathered so," confessed the old man timidly. "And yet, really, I can say nothing— I can add nothing —to what already has been said. I have read Mr. Collis' stories—some of them—and have always like them. I am disposed to like Mr. Collis."

"Don't let Wollston distress you, Mr. Traherne," I cut in as heartily as I could. "I'm not here to plague you; and you may talk about your experience, or not, just as you wish. I *am* interested, of course—who wouldn't be? And I am not a scoffer."

Wollston was a little miffed; but we chatted back and forth for a time, Traherne and I, and ultimately I got him started. He really *did* tell a surprisingly realistic and moving story about a place that *could* have been the Christian Heaven. Or it could have been just some lovely sinless village peopled

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with a race of guileless, happy human beings with whom one would be content to spend an eternity of Sundays —although not, I think, every other day of the week.

It was a charming and beautiful story, beautifully told, with little hesitations and exclamations of wonder that made it all the more delightful as a recital; but there was a note of stern justice in it, too, an undertone that was somehow disturbing and sinister.

It never quite came out, and I can only give my impression of what it meant. But it seemed to me that there must have been a sort of stockade—or something—out beyond the sinless village, where the less sinless villagers were kept. Traherne never saw the place, I believe; but he *heard* it, so to speak, on balmy evenings when he walked out along the river (there was a river) and the breeze was blowing just right. The sounds were frightening.

He seems to have been in the village about two weeks, so the chronology of this narrative is necessarily a bit strange. I can't help that. I'm telling it as I heard it.

Actually I got little more out of him than I had got from Wollston and Appling; less, in a way, for when I mentioned the tollgate man, in an effort to draw him out, he froze and came to a dead stop.

"You know, of course, Mr. Collis," he said after a moment, "that I have written all this down, and a great deal more that I have never told anybody on this earth. If I say that I have set down everything for which the world has been waiting...."

He faltered for an instant, changed his mind, and went on in an altered voice: "I set it down nearly thirty-five years ago, after my first death, so that there might be an accurate record of my experience. The manuscript is in the bottom drawer of my desk, which (forgive me!) locked, under a box of letters; and after my death—when I have died again, and finally—it is to be opened and read. I have asked Mr. Ives, the lawyer, to take care of that for me. The letters were written by my wife, who died in 1911, and I shall appreciate it, Mr. Appling, if you will insist upon their being burnt unread."

"You may depend on me for that, Mr. Traherne," said Appling.

I could not wait any longer. We were all too nervous, too eager, too something, by this time, to be considerate. And Wollston, by this time, who seemed to think the whole thing was his private show, sensed that it was about to end without an answer to its central question.

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"About this mysterious Mr. 'S'," he began cumbrously, but with bluff geniality. Then in a wheedling voice, as if he were addressing a child: "Can't you tell us his whole name? Surely after all these years, Mr. Traherne. . . ." and he ran on for several sentences of sickening blarney that made me writhe.

The clergyman twisted uncomfortably in his chair and said something about "tea."

But old Traherne couldn't, or wouldn't, although he smiled at me apologetically as if to say that he accepted my good faith.

"Just one more *letter* of his name, then," coaxed the insufferable Wollston; and to my surprise the old man yielded.

"Perhaps I could do that," he whispered. "Just one more letter then—*the second letter is a T.*"

I suppose it *did* sound funny; and I suppose it was more than flesh and blood could bear—more than Wollston's flesh and blood could bear, at any rate. I had no idea he was so cynical about it all, or so disappointed in our results. Or perhaps it was just the mounting strain of a difficult conversation. He whooped like a Comanche.

"*Stewart!*" he yelled, as if it were a guessing game; and that did it.

The old man got to his feet with real dignity, shook the clergyman's hand in forgiveness, and—a little blindly—looked for his hat. He was sorry, he said, that he must be going along now; but it was time to give his *ficus elasticus* its airing. That's what he called his rubber plant—I looked it up later.

It was our last word out of old Traherne. Three weeks later he was really dead, in the natural course of events I like to think; and two days after that he was buried.

The funeral brought out everybody in the village, and Appling preached an excellent sermon over the body of the mysterious old revenant.

But what everybody was thinking, of course, while the clergyman rambled on, was about the manuscript in Traherne's desk, written years earlier for just this development.

Wollston and Ives were first out of the church, running—actually running—for the cottage on the outskirts of the village; and I won't say I wasn't hard on their heels. I suppose the decenter people stayed behind for the burial; but there was a fair kite tail of villagers not far behind the foremost runners. . . .

Ives was the first to see what had happened. He was in the lead by that time, and he screamed something at Wollston, and then they both ran faster. I never ran so

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hard in my life; but we were all too late.

The cottage was burning; burning as if it had been doused with gasoline and fired at a dozen different corners. I never saw such a blaze; it was like a bonfire of sunset, like the destruction of the wicked. The heat was terrific and the flames went straight up like a hundred torches. It seemed that one minute the cottage was there, outlined in fire; then it was gone like a toothpick. There was no smoke until afterward—just raging, roaring flame and a heat that would knock you over.

It would have been worth a man's life to enter—although Wollston and Ives were thrown back a couple of times by the heat—and to this day nobody knows what happened to the man who died and was alive again.

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agent 209

by JOHN B. SYLVANO

He half accepted "peeper" but resented being called Judas. He only did his duty when he hunted the others.

HE STARED into the display window of the department store, looking at nothing in particular, but every now and then glancing at the reflection of cold gray eyes. The eyes were not only cold but cynical as well, as if he were ignoring the masses around him and as if he were set off in a world by himself.

Behind his scrawny but well clothed back, the world of citizens moved on about their busiess in the teeming hordes that always seem to infest America's larger industrial cities.

209 let his mind go blank opening it to his only world, a world of jumbled thought patterns which he could grasp or fling away, depending on their nature.

Behind him, the masses moved on, a sea of humanity unaware that their minds were being stripped naked of their impenetrable cloaks and were passing under his careful scrutiny.

.....Martha didn't come to work again today. I wonder if she's sick or....."

".....A nice cold glass of beer would be just the thing right now ....."

Marine Corps Corporal John Sylvano, currently stationed in Oakland, Cal., has spent more than two years in the Far East and also accumulated enough rejection slips "to paper the walk of my squad bay". Agent 209 describes a future Society hunting down all threats to its security.

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".....Wait till Ma sees this report card. If she thought the last one was bad....."

Nothing. Nothing yet. Keep trying, though. Sooner or later, he told himself, someone would come along. Someone who would be thinking an unfortunate thought at an equally unfortunate moment.

".....Damn traffic. A man don't stand half a chance on the street nowadays....."

".....Boy, what a body on that doll. Why doesn't my girl cut down on her eating?....."

".....Let's see now; the topcoats are a bit expensive, but if I cut down on pipe tobacco for a month or two....."

".....during the revolt of 94....."

That was it.

Agent 209 came suddenly to life as if he had been jolted violently into the mass of hurrying people and pursued the thought wave. He seemed to be picking up all kinds of interference as he increased his pace, moving in the direction of the fleeting thought pattern.

".....the nerve of that Susan Weavers....."

".....Someday the office would just collapse when he wasn't there to run it ....."

".....The key mistake espers made was not re- ng their powers to the proper authorities instead of flocking together and trying to overthrow the government....."

There it was again. Stronger this time. Had it been the young college boy who had just cut in ahead of him? 209 weaved in and out of the people moving in front of him.

".....Imagine. A shler buying up all the old Margett stock. Without consulting us, too....."

".....Fifty cents a week for tobacco....."

The spy turned and gazed after the college student who had just turned up a side-street. That must have been him. Quickly he broke out of the crowd and moved after the lad. The closer he got, the stronger the thoughts came through.

Probably the boy was just a sympathizer. Most college students were carefully scanned before entering the universities. But maybe they had missed this one. There was always that chance.

209 didn't have to look at his calendar watch to know that it was now the twenty-seventh of April and only four more days to the deadline. He picked up the thought, carefully analyzing it, hoping that this would be one of them.

".....at the time there was a whole department of the Physical Research Society working in the field of Extra Sensory Perception

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Had they been afraid of what would happen if the public knew that other people could read their minds?"

Of course they were. That was the reason they lodged together and attempted to wipe out the homo-sapiens first. They followed the code 'survival of the fittest' and tried to beat them to it..."

"Blast it! Another sympathizer," swore 209 under his breath. Everyday, more and more sympathizers, throwing him and the other esper spies off the track and sending them on a wild goose chase.

"....leading to the Esper Movement for World Control. If I had been in their place I might have done the same thing..."

Agent 209 drew his blaster and aimed it at the student's head. This was a sure way of uncovering an esper. If the boy were one of the hunted, he'd receive the murderous thought wave and make an effort to defend himself.

"...but what about the innocent espers? Surely they deserved a fair chance. Why should they be hunted down like dogs for the crime their father had committed?"

There was no doubt about it now. The kid wasn't an esper. Only a sympathizer. The agent replaced his weapon in his shoulder holster.

Anger welled up in his chest, making him want to vomit it out upon the college boy in front of him. He could take him on article 43 and probably get a pat on the back from EOESP; but he'd had three previous pats that month and if he didn't meet the quota within the next four days, they wouldn't mean a damn thing. They'd just be gentle pushes towards the fusion pits.

The thought of the fusion pits made him feel queasy as usual and his thoughts returned to the boy in front of him. He had been off chasing him and some valuable esper might have passed the intersection without detection.

Yes, sympathizers were bad medicine for both spies and the EOESP in general and it was his duty to bring him in. The agent increased his pace, reached out with a slim but forceful hand and grasped the youth by the shoulder.

"You'll come with me, please."

The student looked up at 209 in opened mouth astonishment and started to protest, but at the sight of the esper spy badge, resigned himself to his captor and went along in sullen silence.

It was the twenty ninth day of April and Agent 209 sat outside the Englewood Commissioner's office. He had still failed to fill the quota for the month. Now the Commissioner would call him in and give him pep talk or a chewing out. And there was the possibility of getting both.

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"Commissioner Arthobrook will see you now, 209," an attractive secretary said coming out of the office. He watched the steady pendulum of her hips move back and forth provocatively as she walked to her desk. She sat down and he noted the soft contours of her body and the warmth of her pale blue eyes.

But the warmth vanished as she noted him staring at her and she repeated the message of summons once more and gazed at him coldly.

He arose slowly, trying to ignore her frosty glance. Why had he even bothered to look at her? She knew him for what he was. A number without a name. A traitor without persecution.

Two thought words seemed to hang in the air as he went towards the office. "Peeper" and "Judas".

He accepted the word "Peeper", but frowned at "Judas". After all, those espers who were not numbered among the hunted—

He stopped at her desk and met her frosty stare with equally cold eyes. "What would you do in my place?" he asked her.

She turned at her desk and began shuffling some papers, eager to avoid his penetrating gaze. "The Commissioner is waiting to see you," she repeated.

He turned on his heel and proceeded to the frosted glass door in the center of the wall. He stopped his eyes fleeting over the letters looming there.

COMMISSIONER
Elimination of Extra Sensory Perceptists
ENGLEWOOD DISTRICT

How many times had he gone through this door to collect his thirty pieces of silver? Sullenly he opened the door and walked in.

Algren Arthobrook sat behind his desk staring self-consciously at the report on his desk. It wasn't that Arthobrook was a self-conscious person. It was just the air that every norm seemed to assume when they came in touch with an esper mind.

"Sit down, 209, sit down," Arthobrook nodded to a stiff looking chair in front of his desk without bothering to look up from the report.

Agent 209 did so and waited for the commissioner to put an end to the formality and come to the point. He didn't have long to wait.

"I don't suppose I have to tell you that you've been doping off," the commissioner stated, glancing up quickly at 209, "Today is the twenty-ninth and you know what that means."

209 nodded and although the commissioner had resumed his steady gaze at the report, there was no doubt that he knew what the twenty-ninth meant.

"Four sympathizers this month and not one damn esper," exclaimed Arthobrook.

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"Look 209, we aren't after sympathizers. Readjusting sympathizers only wastes the taxpayer's money. Have you any idea what it cost to send a sympathizer through the Maladjustment Center for a brain washing?"

209 shook his head and waited for the commissioner to go on.

"No, of course you don't. You also have no conception of what the taxpayers forked over to send you and hundreds of other esper spies through the Conditioning School every year. All you have to do in turn is produce one esper a month for elimination.

"I've been looking over your record, 209, and I find that up to a few years ago, you were one of our prize agents. You used to turn in almost a dozen espers a month. Now it seems that you can't even meet our smallest demands. What is it? Aren't we paying you enough at the price of one thousand dollars a head?"

Agent 209 shook his head again. "No, it's not that."

The Commissioner looked up at him for the first time since he'd sat down. He sensed the sincerity on the spys voice and realized that he'd have to break down the wall that man had built around these creatures and get to the nature of his problem. An inefficient esper spy was a waste of the taxpayer's money and might as well be fed to the fusion pits. But then electricity cost money, too and Algren Arthobrook was not the man to shove a faithful spy into the pits without giving him a chance to redeem himself.

"I'll bet I know what's troubling you," Arthobrook said, "You've got the 'old traitor complex'."

Seeing the spy wince at the word 'traitor', he knew that he had struck home and continued carefully.

"All you esper spies go trough the same period at some time in life. You feel as if you're on the wrong side of the fence and you wonder if you shouldn't be helping your fellow espers, instead of turning them in for execution. That is the case isn't it?"

209 nodded and the commissioner went on. "You were just a boy during the Esper Movement for World Control, weren't you? You didn't see the bloodshed and misery that the telepathics caused the everyday person. You didn't see people march down to the lake in flocks and throw themselves in under the power of esper illusion. You didn't see the food stolen from the mouths of babes when your fellow creatures halted transportation by sheer mind over matter.

"Well I did. And I'll tell you that it was a sight that I'd never care to see again. If someone hadn't thought of tracking down these esper minds and exterminating

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them, millions would have perished. Only through the Esper Spy System could we successfully track down these fiends and do away with them. Don't you see? You should be proud of the part you're playing in defending the peoples of the free world."

"But that was in 1994. This is thirty years later," protested 209. "The Esper power has dwindled almost completely and yet we're still fighting a war that ended thirty years ago. And what about the telepathics that have been born in the meantime? Should the innocent die with the revolutionists?"

Arthobrook glared at the spy sternly. "A great man... I think he was one of your own people...once said, 'The price of peace is eternal vigilance'. We can't let up now. We have to keep going till we track down every single esper. Only then can we relax."

209 felt like asking what would happen to the esper spies when they were no longer needed, but there was no need to since he already knew the answer. Elimination also solved the problem of having to deal with the spies in the end. If a spy didn't turn in his monthly quota, it usually meant that the world's esper population was dwindling. Thus the number of spies stayed in direct proposition with the world esper population.

Not very often did an esper spy feel the pang of conscience to the extent where he would give up his own life rather than betray one of his fellow creatures. No, the esper, although endowed with several extra powers still processed the homo sapien's law of self-preservation.

The only thing an esper could do to ease his conscience was to turn in the minimum of one esper per month. And if one did that, the other spies, who might be a little less scrupulous, would grab up all the espers in the district, leaving none for the conscience-stricken spies. With the price of a head, there weren't going to be many scruples in the spy system.

Thinking all this, 209 wondered if he were being peeped by some other spy hidden in a closet of the Commissioner's room. If there were it would be the pits for him or quite possibly even the Maladjustment Center.

"Maybe there's a lack of espers running loose in your district," the Commissioner was saying. "Perhaps you'd like to try another section? We have a busy area on the near north side that's been reported to be swarming with esper..."

"No," cut in 209, "I've been feeling pretty run down lately and I think you were

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right about that 'traitor's complex' as you put it. I'll go out and give it another try."

"If you like I might be able to get you a stay of quota. A few days or so," offered Arthobrook, as 209 rose and walked to the door.

"No, I'll find someone; don't worry," declined 209.

"I'm not we who worry," reminded Arthobrook. "And if you don't make the quota ...well...there's always the pits...heh...heh."

The Commissioner intended the remark as a joke as well as a warning, but Agent 209 failed to see any humor in his remark.

"Yes, there's always the pits, isn't there?" he echoed as he closed the door behind him.

Bourbon flowed down his throat like steaming water over smooth plastic tile. It was the thirtieth day of April and Agent 209 had found his quota and turned it in. The thousand dollars he had received would keep him emersed in the luxury he'd grown accustomed to for the next three weeks or so. During that time he'd be under no obligation to the EOESP and he wouldn't have to start scanning the district till the last week or so.

But for the present he would live in modest apartment buildings or cheap hotel rooms, spending most of his money on food or drink and forgetting all about Commissioner Arthobrook and the threat of the pits.

But he couldn't forget the screams of the men he'd sent there. Even the constant flow of alcohol could not help him forget the screams.

EOESP demanded that the esper agents watch the execution of the telepathics they turned in. It was a necessity, the department had said and 209 knew why. Fear breeds efficiency. Each esper knew that one of the persons screaming in the pits might be himself the next month if he failed to turn in his quota. This kept the esper agents very alert and efficient.

The elimination process, as it was called, was all very humane. A large number of convicted espers were herded down the long winding staircase that led to the pits and made to stand under the electronic guns. There wasn't much more to it. A switch was pulled; 300,000 volts filled the pit and after a while the screams yielded to the sound of crinkling static.

Then the spies were congratulated, paid and told to keep up the good work.

For the past five years, 209 had watched the executions once a month, twelve times a year. In the five years prior to that he had seen more; more because he had turned in more than the demanded quota, eager for the fortune he would reap at the

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expense of human souls.

But after a time the novelty of the reward money had worn off and the pangs of conscience set in. Even the nine hard years of processing schools were forgotten. Not really forgotten, but discarded.

He had been sent to the schools at the age of three through his father's high standing in the spy circle. Here, wrongs were converted into rights, black into white, treason into patriotism. Nine years of lectures esper studies, and spy classes. Even after taps recorded lectures filled the dormitories. He had eaten, drunk, and slept anti-esperism for nine hard years, then he had been turned loose to reap his reward. A bitter reward.

At the age of thirteen, he had turned in the sum total of eight espers a month and through this he merited further schooling.

But after five more years, EOESP had made their mistake. They turned him out into civilization. Perhaps they should have made all the spies return to the barracks at the end of each day so that more doctrine could be drilled into their heads. But they weren't. Mainly because the illusion of freedom had to be preserved and the espers were to be treated as equals to the homo-sapiens. The esper spies were never to feel persecuted or inferior. Persecution and Inferiority complexes led to deterioration in the esper's monthly quota and of course, EOESP could not let this happen.

Consequently the esper spies' long doctrination wore off and the quota dropped anyway. EOESP had anticipated this and set the monthly quota. If this wasn't turned in by each esper spy ...well, they could always rely on the newer students.

Agent 209 set his shot glass down, walked over to the tri-optician set and switched it on. The usual soap commercial was already underway and he sat down in his comfortable posti-fit chair and waited for the newscast. Within a few seconds, the commentator came on to announce that three esper spies were eliminated this month for derelection of duty. The latter phrase was always applied in the cases where esper spies had failed to turn in their quotas. The term tended to make the esper spies feel that they were failing in their obligation to their district if they weren't turning in their full quota.

The announcer went on to say that the EOESP Executive Council had proposed a bill for raising the monthly quota to two second class esper or one first class esper in lieu thereof.

Chances of catching a first class esper were slight. Although he himself was la-

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beled first class he decided that he'd stick to catching second class espers for his quotas.

The only difference between the first and the second class esper was the temporary mind block that the first class esper could construct to keep his mind blank. This made thought-probing almost impossible even for another first class esper. But first class esper had been very rare over the past twenty years and the one's who had been turned over had more likely gone to the Malajustment Center, then on to the schools for indoctrination rather than execution.

Setting up a thought block was easy for any esper, whether first or second class. All one had to do was think of some mathematical problem or the lyrics of the latest popular song.

But the difficulty arose when the esper tried to concentrate on another thought behind the barrier. First class espers, said one of his instructors, were made, not born. He himself had spent five years after the nine year course, just setting up thought barricades. Many other esper agents merited another five years education, (by their outstanding class averages and high quotas) and went on to study the art of double-think. Double-think, although seldom mastered, permitted the esper to let his mind run on two channels between the established block. One thought pattern being dominant and the other subdominant.

209 had never mastered the art of double-think and had heard of few that actually had. There were supposedly only ten or twelve agents in the whole country so skilled.

First class espers were rare in themselves and EOESP declared that they were worth twice as much as a second class telepathic.

The televisor rang and 209 reluctantly rose to answer it.

"Hello," he said into the visi-screen. The blurred image on the screen cleared and the agent recognized the district escort arranger; a tall gaunt man apparently in his early forties.

"No, not tonight," 209 stated, anticipating the evident question on the arranger's face.

"But sir," the image protested, "You haven't been out with a woman for the past two months. Don't you think....."

"My thoughts are no concern of yours," 209 interrupted, "unless you're a member of the EOESP." Then in all finality he replaced the receiver and went back to the set. Another commercial was in progress and he switched it off disgustedly.

"But sir, you haven't been out with a woman for the

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past two months," he mimicked the arranger.

And neither would he if he had to sit there and catch snatches of their thoughts all evening.

"*.....sometime I wonder why I let myself drop to this level. Giving myself to one of these parasites.....*"

"*.....well, anyway they make good money at a thousand a head.....*"

"*.....why am I thinking all this? He might be reading my thoughts right now.....*"

209 paused by the terrace window, looking down at the swarms of people below. All those people, he thought; all those people down there and not a one that I can associate with without hating them for their inner thoughts. No Norm would have anything to do with me for fear I might peep something in their minds that shouldn't be there and my own people won't have anything to do with me either; not that I blame them. I might be buying the drinks one day and sending them to the pits the next.

He had tried to seek out associations with the other esper spies, but the ones he had graduated with had been sent to other parts of the country or had since been eliminated. All the spies talked of nothing but their recent quotas.

".....he had been living right in the same apartment building with me for the past three and a half months and I never even noticed it. Why if I had known that at this time last month I could have made enough to buy that new "23" stratomobile. But by next month....."

Safe behind his mind block, 209 laughed at this. Wait a few years and you'll loose that mercenary attitude. Wait'll you get both ears filled with the screams of your victims while they burn in the pits, then that new stratomobile won't mean so much to you.

Of course he didn't say any of this to the others. One of these young fools might turn me in for a traitor, he thought.

When he could he usually beat a hasty retreat when the topic of conversation turned to esper hunting. But sometimes he couldn't avoid their questions.

".....what about your latest conquest, 209? I heard you caught a first class today; on your last day, too....."

He remembered the boy he had captured that morning.

It had been in the poorer section of his district when he'd picked up the thought waves.

"*.....got to get back with the groceries. If there should be a spy around here.....*"

He had spotted the boy retreating from a shabby cor-

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ner store and had caught up with him a few seconds later. The boy must have received his thought waves because he was off and running, leaving the bag of groceries sprawling across the sidewalk.

".....maybe he'll lead me to more of them....." thought 209 as he followed at a distance. But the lad must have caught this thought wave, too, for he turned and stopped, waiting for the agent.

".....you'd like me to do that wouldn't you?....."

".....I was just thinking that someone of your family might want to go in your place; you're kind of young ...for...for....."

".....the pits? Is that what you were going to think?...."

".....yes, I don't want to take you in. Maybe you have a father or an older brother....."

".....Go to hell. What do you think I am?.....You'd turn us all in and collect a thousand a piece for us....."

"....No, honest.....I don't want to take you in....."

".....You're wasting your time ....I won't take you to the others....."

".....You don't believe me....."

".....Even if I did, and you only took me in as a minimum you'd be back for the rest if the going got rough and your quota low....

Agent 209 realized that the boy was right and the only reason he'd offered to spare him was for the hope of finding a steady quota for the next few months. But the boy was so young.

".....You won't change your mind?....."

".....No....."

".....Then I have no choice; you'll have to come with me....."

And he had gone. Expert thought probers at EOESP had tried to find out where the rest of his friends were situated, but he had constructed a strong mind block using only a simple nursery rhyme and by the time the information was obtained the other espers had long since dispersed.

After the probing the boy had been offered the choice of the pits and the indoctrination school. Much to his surprise the boy had gone bravely to the pit and died without a cry of protest.

209 wondered what had inspired the esper lad to choose the pits over life itself. He found himself weighing the boy's strength with his own and came out second best. But both of them had been trained in very separate worlds. If the boy had seen the pits and had been indoctrinated since the age of three there would have been little difference between the two of them.

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After the elimination process, the Commissioner had congratulated him and warned him not to put his quota off till the last minute again as he had this month. The next time he might not be so fortunate.

Fortunate? The word ran through his mind over and over, a witness of it's own mockery. Fortunate that he had turned in a fourteen year old boy for the pit? Fortunate that he was born as esper and indoctrinated into the esper spy system? That was being fortunate?

He laughed a hollow laugh and poured himself another drink. Across the street he could see the cinema and the soft neon glow of the billboard seemed to offer an intimate warmness that might dispell the gloom the apartment forced on him.

Hopefully, he slipped on his Plaston jacket and left the apartment.

The feature was a four dimension travelscope of the planet Mars, filmed by a recent expedition. Agent 209 sat quietly for the first half hour of the film; then the feeling of nervousness began to seep into his system. It was a feeling that often came over him, especially when he was in closed places with the masses.

He sank back in the seat; letting his mind go blank; trying to shut out his own troublesome thoughts. And then it came. Through the masses of jumbled thought patterns as if forcing admittance into his mind.

".....Of course I can stay for the second show. I've gotten out of the city before without being caught and I can do it again. But if an esper spy should....."

209 turned in his seat, peering into the darkness seeing nothig but a mass of semi-lighted countenances staring back at the screen. He turned back to the screen again and tried to pick up the thought pattern again.

".....This movie is so good and it's so seldom that I get a chance to enjoy one....."

Probably an esper living on the outskirts of the city, every now and then venturing in for a movie and a game of cat and mouse. Now somewhere in the rear of him was his mouse and a monthly quota. But how could he flush him out?

Almost instantly the principles of detecting espers returned to him. The first principle involved analyzing thought patterns and the process was called pattern elimination. This phase of detecting was out of the question. It would take entirely to long in the enclosed area where the patterns were so jumbled.

But the second principle was more practical. Provoke panic. Excite the hidden es-

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per until he himself made his presence obvious with some uncalled for movement. 209 cut into the esper's thoughts with razor-edged ferocity.

".....the pits for you, esper.....the pits....."

".....Must get away.... no....."

".....yes.....the pits don't try to escape. I know just where you are....."

".....Must get away.... run....."

This was it. 209 turned and watched the aisle. He saw the figure about a dozen rows in back step out onto a slide thread and move towards the exit. Springing to his feet he stepped on the same thread and ran towards the silhouette outlined in the red glow of the exit light.

".....if I can get outside...."

That was the one alright. Principle Two always worked. Excite them and they betray themselves.

".....shouldn't have run .....he wouldn't have found me if I'd stayed in the crowd...."

".....That's right. But it's too late now and I'll get you. You'd better stop. Once outside, I'll be able to use my blaster....."

He was almost on top of his prey now, in a few minutes he'd be able to reach out and grasp..... Forty yards ahead of him, the panel opened and slid closed as the pursued darted out of the theater and into the lobby. 209 was there now and jerked on the panel. If the lobby was crowded.....

The lobby was practically deserted. Two persons and a door swinging noiselessly on plastic hinges 209 looked on to the next wall of outer doors and noticed that they were not swinging. His opponent would have had to be a track star to be out of the theater in the short time it had taken him to reach the panel and step into the lobby. No, one of the two people present must have given the door a kick to make it look as if the esper had run into the street.

One of the people was a robust man in his early fourties who was swallowing some pills by the water fountain. 209 cut in on his thought pattern.

".....Damn ulcers! Can't even enjoy a good movie anymore....."

No, it must be the other one. He turned to the figure at the automatic refreshment vender and stared in astonishment. Although the esper's back was to him, there was no mistaking the roundness of the hips or the long golden hair.

His latest victim was a girl!

He moved towards her feeling the quiver of terror in her thoughts.

".....just act n o r m a l

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.....he'll think I've gone through the door....."

"Will I?" 209 asked out loud, desiring the same effect he produced inside the theater.

She whirled, giving herself away again. This time the terror was not merely contained in the tremor of a thought wave but in the depths of two limpid blue eyes. The glass shook in her hand and some of the amber liquid sloshed out and onto her long smooth fingers.

"Please....," the trembling rose of her lips broke in utter helplessness.

"You're spilling your drink," he replied. But his eyes remained fixed to her classic countenance rather than the untouched drink in her hand. There was nothing glorified about her hair. It was simply combed back and almost absolutely waveless. Her eyes were level and despite the tears about to overflow their lids he could that their beauty was unsurpassed by the average woman. She was so young.

"I don't even know you. I ....I never did anything to you. Please....I'll do anything. Just don't turn me in. I couldn't stand it.... please...."

He could hardly hear her above the pounding of his own heart. All he was aware of was her trembling pleas and the beautiful lithe body that honored the almost out of place clothes she was wearing.

"Oh, God...don't just stand there. You won't turn me in, will you? You'll find someone else to fill your quota. Why...the city must be teeming with espers. It doesn't have to be me, does it?"

"You'll come with me, please." The words were a matter of indoctrination rather than intent. He gripped her in the same way he had taken the college boy a few days before and guided her reluctantly towards the door.

".....where are you taking me?....."

".....to the nearest EOESP phone....."

".....please....."

".....Knock it off! I have a quota to fill just like any other esper spy....."

".....What will they do to me?....."

He didn't answer her question and he ignored her as they moved out onto the sidewalk in front of the ciema. Crowds of people were hurrying in out of the rain that washed the streets in torrents.

The nearest EOESP phone was three blocks away and his apartment was directly across the street. No sense in going all that way. Not in this weather. It might take a little longer to reach EOESP on the regular party line, but he'd have a chance

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to dry up and study his captive.

".....they'll burn me in the pits, won't they?....."

"Get across the street," he said. I better phone from my apartment."

They moved through the onslaught of people and into the ele-chute outside his hotel building. They rode up in silence, the only two in the tube. He watched her with interest now.

She couldn't be any more than twenty-one or twenty-two, he thought, watching her stand defeated and helpless against the concave wall of the tube. Once again he opened his mind to hers intercepting her thoughts on a clear channel.

".....He doesn't look like the kind of person who'd turn someone in. He looks sort of lonesome; like he didn't ever have anyone to look after him. Maybe he's been looking for that someone just like I have. Maybe he sees her in me....."

The panel opened and for a few seconds he was ignorant to this fact as he marveled over the girl's silent observations. It was almost as if she were reaching down into his soul grasping for his most secret emotions. She could have been probing me, he thought. But even if she were, he wasn't in a depressed state at the present moment. The early gloom of depression had been exiled by the thrill of a new conquest and there were no thoughts whatsoever of loneliness running through his mind. How could she know so exactly how he sometimes felt. Was there something deeper than telepathy involved here?

She looked up at him and then to the open panel as if she were contemplating escape.

She's trying to trick me. Trying to divert my attention with thoughts of emotional rabbish so she can make a break.

But she made no break for the hall. She simply stood there waiting for him to call EOESP.

"Come on," he said harshly, pulling her out of the tube and across the hall to his room.

".....I must have been wrong about him.....he's not lonely.... I can tell by his grip....."

He loosened his grip almost instantaneously upon reception of the thought. What was wrong with her? Didn't she know he could read her thoughts? Perhaps she was so inexperienced at telepathy that she didn't quite realize she was letting her emotions slip out and into his mind. This was often the case where an esper had been secluded from other espers almost since birth. Once turned loose in a big city they seemed completely unaware that their thoughts

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were open and flowing freely under the scrutiny of every other esper in the metropolis. When the hayseed esper arrived at the conclusion of how open his mind was, a period of acute embarrassment usually followed, that is if the esper hadn't already been turned in for elimination. He wondered if she'd blush if she realized how he percepted her thoughts.

He stopped in front of his room and released her. Reaching into his pocket for the key, his hand went almost automatically to his blaster. He felt foolish as he cast a glance at the pathetic girl shivering beside him. He released the weapon and let it sink down into his pocket.

209 opened the door and led her inside.

"Sit here," he told her, motioning to the lounge, "while I make the call."

"You're going to turn me in, then," she said, sinking slowly into the cushions.

"Yes." He started for the phone.

"Please....I don't want to die. I'm only nineteen.... please, don't turn me in. I'll do anything....anything."

Although he felt sorry for her, seeing her throw herself so completely at his mercy gave him a feeling of superiority that he could not repress. He thrust in his knife.

"Anything?"

"Please don't play with me.... What do you want? Money? I don't have very much....but...."

Money. He almost laughed at this, but he didn't wanting to see how far she'd go. He gave his knife a twist.

"You're getting my furniture wet. Take your clothes off."

She didn't move for a second; only stared at him. Then she began whimpering and unbuttoning her sweater. 209 noticed that she did blush.

".....no, not this way .....I never wanted it this way.. I always thought it would be with someone I loved....but he just wants my body. When he's through with me he'll probably turn me in anyway....."

She stopped when the sweater was halfway open and glared at him with a mixture of pity and defiance. "No, I can't do it." She looked away, choking back a sob. "You'd better call. I can't give myself to any man."

He lifted the phone and began dialing Arthobrook's number. "I know I'm not exactly God's gift to the homo superior female, but I didn't think I was that repulsive."

"You know it's not that. It's not that I couldn't let you. It's just that I would be wasting myself on someone that didn't care in the least for me. I thought I saw something in you when we were coming up in the ele-chute,

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but I must have been wrong. You looked like you wanted someone badly, just for love and companionship, not for something selfish."

Embarrassed, he snapped back at her, "I knew what you were thinking, but I've a job to do."

"Then do your job. But don't forget that you might have found something that you've waited all your life for," she replied.

He stared down at her and then back at the phone which was buzzing like an angry bee in his grip. What in hell was he doing? Everything she said had been true. It was if she had looked into his soul and found the very essense of his depressive feelings. Was he passing up something that would make his miserable life more bearable? Could she learn to love him even though he was a Judas?

The buzzing sounded, breaking the film of contemplation that had begun to engulf his mind.

"Hello, Department of the Elimination of the Extra Sensory Perceptist. To whom did you wish to speak?....Hello ....Hello?"

He set the phone back in the cradle. The girl was still crying when he walked over and knelt on the floor beside her. For a long time he just sat there looking at her huddled body and wondered how he could have been so cruel. Then the pent up emotion burst through the wall of indoctrination which had been weakening through the years.

".....I'm sorry.....sorry .....I couldn't turn you in .....ever.....not even if I wanted to....."

She raised her head upon receiving his thought wave.

".....What about your quota. You'd better turn me in. It would mean the pits for you....."

".....I don't care anything about the pits or espers or anything. All I want is love. We can go someplace where no one will find us."

".....You really mean it then. You don't care anything about the spy system, the EOESP or the money or anything....."

He leaned towards her to kiss the soft rose petal of her lips. His goal had almost been attained when they broke open and laughed, loud and mockingly.

Shattered, he grasped her by the shoulders and peeped deeply into her mind. A trick ...a trap. Of course. Why hadn't he seen it?

He was so occupied with her thoughts, that he failed to even notice that Arthobrook and another agent had slipped into the room.

"Let the mind block drop, 303-1." Arthobrook ordered.

209 whirled at hearing his voice. It was all suddenly clear to him.

"You'd better come with us, 209" ordered Arthobrook.

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"She's a double-think, isn't she?" asked 209, astonished.

"One of the few. Her surface thoughts consisted of nothing but what we determined to be your downfall, while the sub-dominate behind her block was trapping you," replied the Commissioner.

209 looked back at her to find that she was sitting up and lighting a cigarette. She stared at him impartially, as if he were just a piece of paper waiting to be pounded out for the price of a day's meal. Her personality had changed in a split second, making him hate her almost twice as much as he had thought of loving her. He almost wished that she had led him into the trap then acted as if they had both really been caught in a revolution. Then thinking that they would have both been executed, he could have gone to the pits believing in something else for a change besides $1000 an esper. But they couldn't have been that kind. After all he was a traitor to the cause.

".....You didn't have to go that far....." he shot to her.

".....All you had to do was go through with the phone call, 209, and things would have been all right. But you had to get sentimental and play lover boy....."

"You see we've been watching you for a long time, 209", explained Arthobrook. "There may be some hope for you, yet. You used to be one of our top men. That's why we went to so much trouble with our little test. But you've been slipping, slow but sure and tonight at the supreme test; you fell. To bad. Maybe the Malajustment Center can do something for you."

"And if not?"

"There's alway's the pits."

Not for me. No pits or Maladjustment Center. If I've given them every other satisfaction, I won't give them that, he thought.

The esper girl caught the thought and screamed a warning to the other two. "Look out he's heading for the window!"

But the warning came to late. He had already smashed through the terrace window when the blaster beam hit him.

One thought was dominate in his mind as he spun downward to the street. It wasn't the pain of the blaster ray or the pangs of conscience that are supposedly present during a man's last seconds of life.

It was the thought that for the first time there was no threat of the pits.

He hoped they received his dying thoughts as he blacked out and fell into the soft neon glow.

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–Continued from other side

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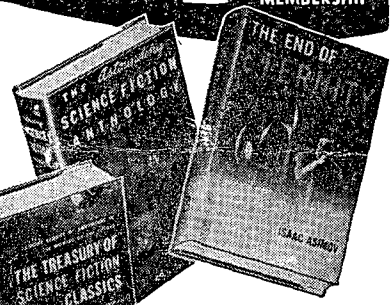

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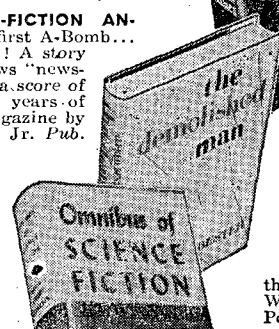

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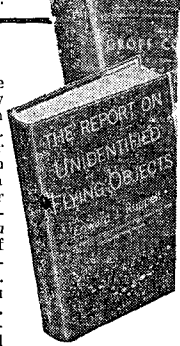

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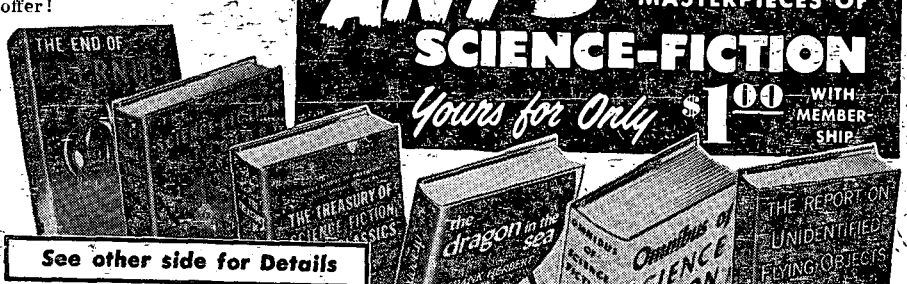

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